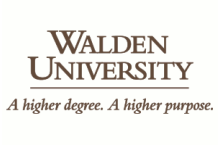

2020

Understanding Causes for Jamaican Dropouts from the Career Advancement Program

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This is to certify that the doctoral study by

Eron G. McLean

has been found to be complete and satisfactory in all respects,

and that any and all revisions required by

the review committee have been made.

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May 2020

Abstract

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Eron G. McLean

MBA, University of New Orleans, 1999

BA, University of the West Indies, 1994

Doctoral Study Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree of

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Abstract

In Jamaica, a significant number of at-risk older youths do not attend school, nor are they employed. The government created the Career Advancement Program (CAP) to provide skills and career options for them, but many students drop out of the program. The purpose of this basic qualitative study was to gain a better understanding of the reasons why students were dropping out of CAP and what could be done to retain them longer. The study was designed to explore why students dropped out of the CAP before completion, to what extent experiences in CAP satisfied student needs, and how experienced and prepared the CAP teachers were to teach adult learners. The conceptual frameworks used to inform the study included Mezirow's transformational learning theory and Freire's pedagogy of the oppressed. Participants were selected through a purposive sampling technique. Data were collected through interviews and questionnaires from 5 current students, 4 dropouts, 6 teachers, and 4 administrators, and data from source documents. Data were analyzed inductively through sorting, coding, and categorizing the responses in ATLAS Ti software. Minor themes that emerged were summarized into 3 broad themes: factors for dropouts, factors for supporting CAP students, and factors for teacher training and preparation. A professional development workshop was created to expose some CAP teachers to the teaching methodology and basic content of adult education theories such as andragogy because most Jamaican teachers in this study had had no previous training on how to teach adults. This project could have a positive impact on the adult education landscape in Jamaica if the local Ministry of Education adopts a policy of requiring improved training for facilitators of adult learners.

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Dedication

The pursuit of this study was a long and grueling exercise that required me to draw on my inner strength to keep going, even in the face of significant challenges. I give credit to my mother for inculcating in me the value of self-efficacy. When we were children, we thought that we could not accomplish many tasks that we were assigned. Mother sternly chided us that impossibility was written only in the dictionary of fools. In the end, we did what we thought we could not have done. I wish to dedicate this study to my mother Lola McLean, whose highest level of formal education was an elementary school, but who understood the value of education and never ceased to motivate me through her encouraging words, prayers, and constant inquiry of when the study would be complete? I hope that this work will influence policy directives within the area of adult education, which will impact the quality of educational offerings to adult students. Mom, I dedicate this work to you with love.

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I am eternally grateful and indebted to my research chair, Dr. Mari Vawn Tinney, and her support, Dr. Green. Dr. Tinney, you have been there for me, incessantly. To me, you were a coach, guide, and motivator. Nothing passed your meticulous eyes, and you ensured that the work was perfect or close enough before I could move on. Dr. Tinney, I always thought of you as my second IRB because you still added your set of requirements for me alongside that of the IRB itself. I have grown tremendously in the process, and I thank you research chair, coach, and mentor.

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Section 1: The Problem

Background

Jamaica is the largest country in the English-speaking Caribbean. It has a population of 2,727,400 people, 50.5% of whom are female and 49.5% male (Statistical Institute of Jamaica [STATIN], 2019). The motto of the country—"Out of Many, One People"—is evident in the ethnic roots of the people, 90% of whom are of African descent while the remaining 10% are a mix of Indians, Chinese, Germans, Jews, Syrians, and Lebanese (Jamaica National Heritage Trust, 2018). The labor force consisted of 1,360,800 individuals as of July 2019, 91% of which are employed (STATIN, 2019). The unemployment rate of the country was 9% in 2018 (STATIN, 2019). The poverty rate is 19.3%, with 526,388 people living close to the poverty line (STATIN, 2019). For students trying to take full advantage of the educational opportunities offered by the Career Advancement Program (CAP), poverty serves as a significant barrier.

The education system consists of several layers. A senior officer of the Ministry of Education, Youth, and Information (MoEYI), outlined layers of the public education system in an unpublished manuscript (officer, personal communication, May 19, 2018). The first level is at the infant or early childhood level, where pupils between the ages of three and five are enrolled. The second layer is at the primary level, where students' ages six to 11 are enrolled in Grades 1 to 6. The third layer is the secondary level, which includes students' ages 12 to 18 who fall between Grades 7 to 13. This education system has been decentralized into six regions across Jamaica. A senior officer in MoEYI, revealed that of the 42,000 students who enter Grade 11 annually, only 22,000 go on to complete the necessary exit examinations that lead to further education or employment

(officer, personal communication, January 27, 2018). The remaining 20,000 students either drop out or leave the system with no qualifications.

In their efforts to improve the quality and access to technical vocational education and training services for the Grades 12 and 13, the leadership of the MoEYI implemented the CAP. Many of the students that eventually enroll in CAP are individuals from that 20,000 who were guided towards improving their life outcomes by gaining marketable skills and qualifications. See Table 1 for the parishes in each region and the number of CAP centers attached to each region.

Table 1

Number of Career Advancement Program Centers by Region and Parishes

Regions	Parishes	Number of CAP Centers
1.	Kingston and St. Andrew	24
2.	St. Thomas, Portland, St. Mary	15
3.	St. Ann and Trelawny	20
4.	St. James, Hanover, and Westmoreland	20
5.	St. Elizabeth and Manchester	24
6.	Clarendon and St. Catherine	30

Note. Adapted from internal CAP Listing document 2017/2018

The leadership of the MoEYI intended to target potential students between the ages of 16 and18 to join CAP. Their aim for the program is to (a) increase relevance, (b) build capacity, (c) improve quality, (d) expand access, and (e) achieve equity. The CAP was designed to include features focused on those aims:

1. Elective training in technical and vocational specializations in areas of students' interests.

2. Training and exposure to life-coping skills such as personal and career development, civics, personal and national values, law and order, entrepreneurship, and good citizenship.
3. Job attachment/work experience to obtain hands-on exposure to the world of work.
4. Career guidance, coaching, orientation, and preparation for related jobs.

Available Career Advancement Program Opportunities

The framers of CAP intended to provide youth in Grades 12 and 13 with technical vocational training and some other general education competencies. The teenagers acquired these professional and general competencies while preparing for the Caribbean Advanced Proficiency Examinations (CAPE). These students pursued both the academic (CAPE) and vocational (CAP) pathways because it would enable them to gain dual certification. The developers of CAP designed the program to include the core and component areas that assist students in their personal and professional development. These students chose to participate in only one of the skill courses, one that aligned with their regular course of study. Students who pursued and received the Technical Vocational Education and Training (TVET) skill certification in Grade 11 were not eligible for enrollment in CAP. The CAP includes three opportunity tracks, two technical and one general, that align with secondary schools as well as other educational providers that register and establish Grade 12 CAP programs.

Technical Opportunity A

The administrators designed this option for those students who chose to pursue technically oriented vocations, and who showed the aptitude for the same. These students

attained a pass or higher in at least one traditional subject (mathematics, English, principles of business, principles of accounts, geography, or any science subject) from the Caribbean Secondary Education Certificate (CSEC) or its equivalent. Students who received a score of 4 or 5 in mathematics and or English were only able to redo the subject(s) at an approved CSEC center in a bid to be successful in the subject. These students then pursued a TVET course at either Level 1 or 2, in addition to the other mandatory core areas. Students who pursued these opportunities went on to attend secondary school or matriculate into other educational institutions that identified students with the same ability.

Technical Opportunity B

The administrators designed this option for students who chose to pursue technically oriented vocations and who showed the aptitude for those subjects. These students were required to have attained the minimum score of 25 in the Human Employment and Resource Training (HEART) Trust's Diagnostic Test in both mathematics and English because they would not have passed the CSEC subject equivalents. These students were then required to pursue both mathematics and English in the City and Guilds examinations. They also pursued a TVET course at either Level 1 or 2 in addition to the other mandatory core areas. The administrators aligned this option with secondary schools as well as other educational institutions that identified students with the same learning need.

General Opportunity

The administrators designed this training opportunity for those students who did not attain the minimum score of 25 in the HEART Diagnostic Test for both mathematics

and English. These students needed further training in literacy and numeracy before they could choose a vocation with any level of confidence or certainty. Students who enrolled under the general opportunity track received remediation before they could access any of the leading programs.

The Problem of Dropouts From Cap

The administrators of CAP enrolled large numbers of at-risk youth each year. But every year, too many students dropped out before the end of the program. Having too many CAP dropouts was the local problem. Students attended this program in 133 centers. Principals of secondary and tertiary public schools, as well as a few private institutions, established many of the centers in their respective institutions. My institution was a tertiary institution. Most participating institutions experienced significant challenges retaining students on through completion of the program. Towns across the island then had to deal with these dropouts as unemployed youth. The original intent was to operate CAP as an afternoon program so students could work during the day and attend school in the afternoon. Many students from violence-prone areas dropped out of the program because they felt unsafe traversing the roads at night. This situation led many students to request that the CAP program be offered during the day so they would be off the streets before nightfall. Students who received employment could not adjust to this new daytime schedule and, therefore, dropped out of the program.

On the surface, because the students received employment, some administrators could say the program had been a positive development. However, given that these students were not certified, they were qualified for only entry-level, unskilled positions with low wages. Although this low level of compensation provided some financial relief,

it was not enough to change the students' financial status, or future, significantly. These students were not competent enough to take on roles that could impact their organization's bottom line in any considerable way. Moreover, once students had dropped out of high school, they proved to be a costly burden to the broader society over their lifetime because they could make little or no tax contributions. They frequently relied on public assistance for necessary provisions and were more likely to lead a life of crime (Chapman, Laird, & Kewal Ramani, 2011; Levin & Belfield, 2007; Rouse, 2007). Students who dropped out of secondary school ran the risk of not being employed, and like those students who dropped out of high school, they often became a burden on the state or would eventually fall prey to gangs and other antisocial activities (Belfield & Levin, 2007; Rumberger, 2011; Swanson, 2009).

Voigt and Hundrieser (2008) explained that student retention refers to the number of students who start a program and remain until graduating with their cohort at the designated completion time with the appropriate certification. Dropping out is the opposite of retention. Mawere (2012) and Khanam, Quraishi, and Nazir (2016) noted that dropouts were students who left the education system before the scheduled end date of their programs. According to the raw, unpublished data shared by one of the CAP directors, between 2012 and 2016, 31,879 students across the island were enrolled in CAP (director, personal communication, July 20, 2017). However, of that number, only 15,939 students completed the program. These numbers suggest that approximately half of the students who began the program did not complete it.

Suggested Factors in Jamaica That Could Cause Dropouts

CAP administrators across the country were unsure of the causes for the high dropout rates. Several factors were suggested as reasons for this significant rate of dropouts from the national CAP. Some of the main factors suggested were (a) inadequate sources of funding for students to attend classes, (b) community violence that forced many students to stay home, (c) lack of family support, (d) some students found new employment, and (e) lack of continued interest in the program by some students (administrator, personal communication, July 30, 2017).

In some cases, students reported that (a) they felt like misfits, (b) their institutions had the wrong timing for classes, (c) their institution did not offer the programs they desired, (d) they felt forced to attend the specific school by parents, (e) they felt dissatisfied with their selected program, and (f) they experienced family disagreements (Khanam et al., 2016). The negative stigma of grade retention was also a critical cause of dropping out of school (Demanet & Van Houtte, 2016).

There were many perspectives on the reasons for dropouts. Orion, Ferosuelo, and Cavalida (2014) asserted that among the various reasons why students dropped out of school, financial goals was the most significant. Some authors argued that there was often a discrepancy between learners' expectations of the program and what was delivered by the CAP institution, which caused some students to drop out (Last & Fulbrook, 2003; O'Donnell, 2011). In Botswana, which had a high student dropout problem comparable to the Jamaican context, scholars identified truancy as the single most significant factor that caused students to drop out of school (Statistics Botswana, 2015). The main categories encompassing the reasons for dropping out were (a) psychological, meaning personality

traits, cognitive, social, or emotional dysfunctionalities that led students to drop out; or (b) expressions of culture or the environment in which a person lived, which included factors such as family or educational and socioeconomic status (Opre et al., 2016). The administrators of CAP were cognizant of the challenges students in the program faced and attempted to implement measures to alleviate some of those challenges. Some of these measures included (a) providing lunches to some students while they were at school, (b) offering bus fares for students who expressed difficulty with transportation, and (c) providing makeshift accommodations for students who needed temporary shelter. The program itself is free of charge to each student but thus far, these initiatives were not able to stem the dropout rate.

Student Needs Transcend Financial Reasons

This trend was not unique because the Jamaican experience bears some similarity to the Philippines, which utilized a low-tuition fee and a flat entrance fee to encourage students to complete their degrees. Despite these lower fees, several students still dropped out (Orion et al., 2014). The administration's inability to retain more students in CAP suggested that there were significant gaps between the intentions behind CAP and the results of CAP in practice, which required further study to discover approaches that might close those gaps. This startling reality of dropouts despite the program being free highlighted the fact that students needed more than just having their tuition fees paid to encourage them to complete their programs. Considering additional unmet student needs was particularly important to school administrators because student retention was one of their primary goals in the program (Mphale, 2014).

Local Initiatives to Prevent Dropouts

Students who attended this program in Jamaica had other challenges that were significant enough to cause them to withdraw from their programs. A senior officer of CAP cited examples of specific initiatives aimed at supporting students who remained in CAP. One of the initiatives was an apprenticeship placement program on school campuses (officer, personal communication, July 30, 2017). This extra placement program allowed students to work and generate income while they studied. Many students matured personally and professionally through this medium, and some gained long term employment contracts with their schools while others who attended CAP on tertiary campuses enrolled in 4-year bachelor's degree programs.

Despite the success of these apprenticeship programs, the issue of students dropping out remained a high priority. Student attrition represents a high cost to educational institutions in terms of revenue. More than that, the rate at which students dropped out also represents a huge loss of the country's investment in higher education. I recently learned that in the United States, between 2003 and 2008, universities received 16.8 billion dollars relative to their student enrollment. However, a significant number of those students exited their program within the first year of study (Schneider, 2010). Some administrators might have concluded that the strategies implemented to retain students were either irrelevant or the standards were inadequate to meet the needs of the students.

More than one-third of Jamaica's children have no father figure in their lives, leaving the birth mother or a grandmother to take on the parental role. This situation occurs in over 90% of households on the island of Jamaica, (Planning Institute of Jamaica [PIOJ] & STATIN, 2014). The consensus among the citizenry of the island is that many

men have been derelict in their duties to care for their children and spouses. To counter this negative perception, Dr. Chevannes from the University of the West Indies spearheaded a series of discussions in February 1991, among men called Fathers Only. The discussions ultimately led to the formation of an organization called Fathers Incorporated (Williams, 2010). This name was adopted because women also played a significant role in this organization, which was set up to help men take on a more nurturing role in the lives of their children and spouses. The aim of this organization was also to help to repair the negative perception people had about men and to place fatherhood in a more positive light (Williams, 2010). The formation of this group on the island was a much-needed intervention. The consequence of predominantly female-headed families often resulted in limited financial resources and reduced care for the children. The absence of fathers from the home often resulted in their children being underachievers who would go on to engage in antisocial behaviors when they became older (McLanahan, Tach, & Schneider, 2013).

As of July 2019, the total number of working-age Jamaicans was 1,360,800. Of this number, 315,200 had some form of qualification (degrees, diplomas, certificates). Apprenticeships and internships accounted for 65,500, while 23,600 were employed in a professional or vocational area with no formal qualifications (STATIN, 2019). The HEART Trust, formed in 1980, was subsequently established as the national training agency tasked with training Jamaicans who could no longer attend secondary school because of their age in the skills needed enter the workforce. Many students who graduated from secondary school, and several who dropped out of secondary school, took advantage of this training opportunity. Surveyors found that 804,200 students were

neither working nor had any formal qualifications (PIOJ, 2017). The high level of unemployment could be a trend stemming from the enormous rate of students who dropped out, especially during their last 3 years in secondary school.

Innovative Work Systems

Innovative work systems rely on a well-educated and well-trained workforce in order to (a) generate new ideas, (b) manipulate technology, and (c) adapt to technological changes across society (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development [OECD], 2015). Students who left the education system early did so before developing the high levels of innovative skills needed to participate in these work systems. Often, this lack of skills resulted in students who were unable to keep their jobs because they entered employment before learning the life skills that they needed in order to function (Mphale, 2014). CAP currently does not have the necessary resources to track each dropout so attempts can be made to encourage them to return to the program. However, if students return and express interest in reintegrating into the program, they would not be denied reentry.

Broader Educational Situation in Jamaican National Schools

Low or Intermittent Attendance

The Jamaican MoEYI considers low or irregular attendance as a precursor to dropping out and has sought to understand the effect of intermittent participation on the general school population. A senior official in MoEYI, highlighted that in the academic year 2013/2014, school attendance rates in all six regions ranged between 79.1% and 81.8% at the infant level. At the primary level, the attendance rate ranged between 84.9% and 87.5%, while at the secondary level, the attendance rate was 80.5% and 84.5% across

all six regions. In all instances, the attendance rate of males trailed behind that of the females by at least two percentage points. The data that were shared, when disaggregated by parish, showed that the city had higher attendance levels across the infant, primary, and secondary groups than rural parishes. The data further indicated that 35 schools had an attendance rate below 70%, with two schools showing attendance rates below 50% (official, personal communication, January 11, 2018).

Researchers who probed into the reasons for the low attendance rates identified four major themes among said reasons including: (a) student factors, (b) school factors, (c) parental factors, and (d) community factors (MoEYI, 2016; Opre et al., 2016).

Student factors. Student factors relate to reasons inherent to a student's life or circumstances. Often, a student's reason for not attending school was that they were experiencing one of the following situations:

1. There was a low priority placed on education by both the students and their parents.
2. Many students were fully occupied at home on Fridays providing support to the economic pursuits of their family.
3. Many students displayed truant behaviors.
4. Many students performed poorly academically.
5. Some students did not register to take final exams and therefore disengaged themselves from regular teaching and learning activities.
6. Some students received holiday work and continued to work after the holidays ended.
7. Some students had difficulty learning.

8. Some students lacked motivation.
9. Some students did not receive an adequate orientation.
10. Some students felt socially inadequate among their peers (MoEYI, 2016; Opre et al., 2016).

School factors. Researchers associated (a) distance travelled by students to school, (b) poor teaching and learning environment, and (c) difficulty to access schools located in violence-prone areas to low attendance in school. Researchers have also posited that bullying is a predictor of dropping out of school (Cornell, 2015).

Parental factors. Ministry officials have linked the following familial factors to lowering a student's attendance: (a) low economic standing of parents, (b) inadequate parental skills, and (c) low expectations of parents for their children (Rumberger, 2011).

Community factors. Community factors have also contributed to lower student attendance, factors such as (a) violence in the area surrounding the school or along the travel route, (b) work on the farm, (c) work in community cultural and economic activities, and (d) the misperception that minimal teaching and learning took place on Fridays, days preceding holidays, and the first week of each semester (Rumberger, 2011).

A senior ministry official further noted that there were times when school attendance was noticeably lower. These included (a) days when the Program of Advancement Through Health and Education (PATH) beneficiaries did not receive lunch, and (b) the beginning of January when parents are expected to pay outstanding auxiliary fees (official, personal communication, April 26, 2017). The ministry official shared a report that outlined several steps they were taking to mitigate the problem of irregular attendance. They implemented breakfast and lunch programs and increased the number of

days PATH students received lunches. Teachers refer students who were frequently absent to the guidance counselors who then contact the students' parents. School administrators also forged alliances with parent and teacher associations, along with past students' associations in order to assist needy students in as many ways as possible, such as obtaining uniforms, transportation, career counseling, mentoring, and financial support (official, personal communication, April 26, 2017).

In a public meeting, a senior government minister explained that the government had plans to increase PATH benefits, and she appealed to parents to ensure that their children maintained full attendance in school (minister, personal communication, April 26, 2017).

The Rationale for the Problem

The problem of dropouts appears to be emerging into a global phenomenon that that many countries are grappling with. This problem should be addressed because of the vast and varied implications dropouts have for a country's productivity and economic and social well-being. This study is critical because a substantial investment in adult learning and education can add substantial value to the financial prosperity and sustainability of a nation (UNESCO Institute of Lifelong Learning, 2009). The government of Jamaica bought into this philosophy, investing significant resources into the CAP in order to assist young people to find career paths. This investment was, and still is, expected to pay dividends once trained graduates enter the job market and start becoming productive citizens. Leaders in the government hope that through the realization of this goal, fewer young people will be recruited into gangs or other antisocial activities.

Response to High Dropout Rate

In an e-mail from the CAP administrator, I learned that the dropout rate was approximately 50% (administrator, personal communication, July 30, 2017). In response to this situation, CAP administrators embarked on a series of initiatives to satisfy some of the needs of students. They hoped that by fulfilling the needs of more students, more students would remain in the program until completion, thus contributing to the government's initiative to have more of its workforce trained in the necessary competencies to combat unemployment and other social issues that arise from a high dropout rate.

In this study, I examined the specific gaps or shortcomings of the current initiatives focused on addressing the needs of students. I made suggestions based on collected data of some possible changes to the initiatives that CAP administrators can use to narrow said gaps or shortcomings in order to improve student retention rate. A well-trained workforce is required to build a system of innovation in the workplace (Vincent-Lancrin, 2016). This spirit of innovation in a prepared workforce is a necessary factor for businesses to compete both locally and globally.

A former Minister of Education explained that about 2,016 students between Grades 8 and 9 drop out of school each year. This figure represented 1.8% of that age cohort, which gets even higher in certain regions of the country where there is lotto scamming. The minister promised to take a zero-tolerance approach to the problem of students who drop out of school, acknowledging that those students who drop out increase their risk of being unemployable or of falling prey to social issues such as crime or unplanned pregnancy (minister, personal communication, September 16, 2015).

The minister then outlined several measures designed to respond to the dropout problem. The minister asked principals to double their efforts to identify dropouts and reintegrate them back into school. The minister also approved the appointment of social workers for each region while also increasing the school system's partnership efforts with the police. School administrators were also encouraged to utilize means of punishment that did not include suspension or expulsion to keep these students in school (minister, personal communication, September 16, 2015). Many authors agree that students who receive punishment tend to perform poorly academically. School administrators ultimately end up expelling these students from school, and these students often ended up in the juvenile or criminal justice systems (Kim, Losen, & Hewitt, 2010, p. 78; Sykes, Piquero, Gioviano, & Pittman, 2015).

Improved partnership with the police appears to be having a positive impact on curbing some antisocial behaviors. In an e-mail from a senior member of the police force, the number of fights in schools dropped from 915 in 2012 to 16 in 2016. There were 23 robberies in 2012 and 14 in 2016, three murders in 2012 with none in 2016. There were 52 incidents of wounding in 2012 but only 16 in 2016. The drafters of the e-mail also highlighted 135 events that occurred in 2012 that they described as other, but only two incidents of the same type occurred in 2016. This information also highlighted that scissors were the most frequently used offensive weapon. The senior member of the police force further shared that in 2012, they confiscated 915 knives from students while in 2016, they seized 1,670 weapons comprising knives, scissors, machetes, ice picks, and other implements from students. However, in 2017, they commandeered only 197 similar weapons (police officer, personal conversation, December 10, 2017).

Many students attached themselves to organized groups that law enforcement designated as youth gangs. These gangs often rivaled each other in physical combative exchanges. These youth gangs usually consist of three or more members between the ages of 15–34. Their primary mission is to pursue criminal activities (Gayle, 2017). When such organizations are in the formal school system, school administrators may interpret members of the gangs as potential recruits of more prominent gangs. Boys who are drafted into youth gangs often display characteristics such as those recruited into prominent gangs. One researcher postulated that members of youth gangs did not have parents. Moreover, for those gang members who had parents, the relationships between them and their parents was poor. These gang members often feel hopeless and do not expect to live very long. They are usually very poor and vulnerable, and they look to the gangs for economic sustenance and protection (Gayle, 2017). School administrators who are informed may be better prepared to (a) evaluate a student's level of proclivity to resort to antisocial activities such as joining gangs, (b) single out these students for special attention, and (c) implement mitigating strategies to reduce the promulgating of these antisocial activities.

Through this study, I aimed to (a) understand why many students do not complete the CAP, (b) examine the adequacy of support CAP students received, and (c) examine the level of training that CAP teachers received to teach adult students.

Definitions of Terms

To aid readers' understanding of the content and context of the study, I define the key terms used throughout the study.

Advance fee fraud (Lotto scamming): The amount an investor is asked to pay as a fee to receive the proceeds of his investment (Caribbean Policy Research Institute, 2012).

Career Advancement Program (CAP): An education and training program that provides youths with greater access to educational opportunities. Through these opportunities, youths can increase their chances of either gaining meaningful employment upon completion or qualifying to matriculate into higher levels of studies (MoEYI, 2010).

Caribbean Secondary Education Certificate (CSEC): The exit examination used to evaluate the academic performance of students at the end of the stipulated 5 years of high school. The certificates this examination issues are the primary qualification required for entry into tertiary institutions across the Caribbean (Overseas Examinations Commission, n.d.).

City and guilds: Organizations of leaders on the island who help people, organizations, and economies develop skills needed for growth.

Employability skills: The soft skills needed for obtaining, maintaining, and succeeding in a job while also remaining flexible to change (International Labor Organization, 2013).

Dropout: "[T]hose students who leave school without the school's approval or permission either to attend another school or to stay home" (Chinyoka, 2014, p. 294).

Parent Teachers Association (PTA): A local organization of parents and teachers aimed at promoting closer relations between teachers and students in order to improve educational facilities at a school.

Principles of Accounts: A course of study that introduces the principles and techniques that accountants employ in measuring, processing, evaluating, and communicating information about the financial performance and position of a business (Caribbean Examinations Council, 2015).

Principles of Business: A course that focuses on the theoretical and practical aspects of business activities. Teachers in this course provide a framework to assist in more informed decision-making by individuals in their role as producers or consumers. The course also engages students in conducting research, which helps to improve their communication and critical thinking skills and creates an awareness of business ethics and social responsibilities (Caribbean Examinations Council, 2015).

Program of Advancement Through Health and Education (PATH): A conditional cash transfer program funded by the Government of Jamaica and the World Bank, the aim of which is to deliver benefits by way of cash grants to the neediest and most vulnerable in society. PATH was introduced island-wide in 2002 (Ministry of Labor and Social Security, 2018).

Human Employment and Resource Training (HEART) Trust / National Training Agency (NTA): A statutory agency within the Ministry of Education, Youth, and Information mandated by an act of Parliament to coordinate and facilitate the training and assessment of the Jamaican workforce to international standards (HEART Trust/NTA, n.d.).

National Council on Technical, Vocational Education and Training (NCTVET): A group entrusted with developing standards, accreditation programs, develop assessments,

and awarding certificates and diplomas to individuals who displayed competence in a variety of vocational areas (HEART Trust/NTA, n.d.).

Parish: A unit of area that is governed by a local administrative body. The island is divided into these administrative units. (Gleaner Archives, 2001).

Technical skills: The skills and aptitudes needed to undertake specific scientific, technology, mathematics, and engineering tasks that are tangible in nature (HEART Trust/NTA, n.d.).

Technical Vocational Education and Training (TVET): Those aspects of the educational process that involve general education, the study of technologies and related sciences, and the acquisition of practical skills, attitudes, understanding, and knowledge relating to occupations in various sectors of economic and social lives (Bhurtel, 2015; Rawkins, 2018).

Unattached youths: According to the Career Advancement Program Concept Document (MoEYI, 2010), youths between the ages 17 to 24 who were unemployed and who did not seek enrollment in a school.

Unplanned/unintended pregnancy: Pregnancies that, at the time of conception, were either mistimed (which means that the female had planned to become pregnant later on) or unwanted (which means that the female did not want to become pregnant at all). This type of pregnancy may involve unplanned births, deliberate abortion, or miscarriage (Singh, Sedgh, & Hussain, 2010).

Work-based education: Learning experiences for students that include workplace mentoring, paid work experience, instruction in workplace competencies, and cooperative education (Smith & Betts, 2000).

Youths at risk: Youths who are susceptible to becoming offenders or victims based on the circumstances in which they live and the extent to which they can integrate into society (Edwards & Rodak, 2016).

Significance of the Study

This study is significant because the conceptualizers of CAP implemented the program with the specific focus of providing youths at risk with training opportunities that would assist them in advancing their careers and improving their quality of living. In one meeting with a senior director of CAP, the director showed me an unpublished, high-level CAP manuscript from 2010 that detailed program concepts and plans. I received permission to record some of the data from that manuscript. According to this early report, at the inception of CAP, approximately 26,000 Jamaican students were leaving the secondary-school system annually without any of the skills needed to qualify, obtain, or keep a job. The demographics of the local education system revealed that in 2008, the Grade 11 cohort consisted of 51,676 individuals (26,661 males and 25,015 females). Of that group, schools were only able to account for 40,690 students in their enrollment records. Of this number, 10,986 exited the system from as far back as Grade 9 (director, personal communication, August 21, 2017).

Additionally, 9,086 (6,518 males and 2,568 females) did not sit for any examination. Furthermore, 6,004 (3086 males and 2,918 females) failed all examinations that they took at the CSEC level. The teachers and administrators in CAP focus on teaching students in the program the skills that they did not acquire in secondary school. At a meeting of legislators, a former minister stated that the government had improved the CAP in order to provide 6,000 students per annum with job-related skills and

upgraded literacy and numeracy levels (minister, personal communication, April 5, 2015).

A senior member of the Technical Working Committee for CAP, noted that the problem of having excessive dropouts from the CAP was likely to affect the government's expectation of the program to reduce unemployment (member, personal communication, August 14, 2017). The unemployment rate among youths aged 14 to 24 was 34.5% in January 2015, but improved to 20% by July 2019 (STATIN, 2015, 2019). The authorities often published the results months after they had concluded the actual labor force survey. From the time that the government implemented CAP, the authorities have not commissioned a full program evaluation in order to determine the effectiveness of the program.

A senior official in the government shared a PowerPoint document with me on the five pillars of the government's crime-fighting strategy. The framers of the document labeled the second pillar as “crime fighting through social development.” The problems which they hoped to address by this strategy included: (a) the breakdown of family structures in society, (b) teenage pregnancy, (c) illiteracy, (d) absenteeism of students at the primary and high school levels, (e) prevalence of gang activities, (f) poor housing, (g) low family income, (h) low educational outcomes, and (i) poor parent-child relationships (official, personal communication, December 10, 2017).

Through completing this study, I can provide administrators with additional insights into the reasons that cause students to disengage from CAP and eventually fall out of the program. I can also provide information regarding gaps in addressing student needs as well as significant gaps in the preparation teachers receive for these adult

students. Many local students who dropped out of CAP, particularly males, (a) often converged on the streets, (b) were unemployed or underemployed, and (c) were sometimes recruited into gangs. From this study, I can provide insight and better understanding into the ways by which CAP administrators might engage current students more effectively so that more students remain in their respective programs of study, thereby slowing the dropout rate from CAP. I welcome CAP administrators to explore some of the suggestions I note in this document with the perspective of finding better ways to prepare their students for the world of work.

Guiding Research Questions

Annually, significant numbers of students exit the formal school system without attaining the requisite number of subjects required to enroll in a tertiary-level educational institution or to receive employment. A senior officer of the MoEYI shared with me an e-mail of an internal document that showed that in the academic year 2011-2012, 11.0% of males and 6.5% females dropped out of school between Grades 8 and 9. The data also indicated that males dropped out at higher rates than females over successive academic years from 2012 to 2016 with males at 12.7%, 8.5%, 13.3%, and 6.7% respectively, while the data revealed that females who dropped out over the same period were 5.4%, 5.4%, 4.7%, and 1.8% respectively (officer, personal communication, May 19, 2018). Invariably, these students fell among the poorer class of society and were from homes with one parent, usually the mother. Their means of sustenance were often minimal, and often, the parent expected the children to go out and earn money to support the family. Many of these students became prime candidates for criminal and other antisocial activities because of their low economic wellbeing, unattached status with the formal

education and training system, or work. In an e-mail shared with me by a senior member of the police force, by age 19, approximately 329 persons were incarcerated by the police for the first time (police member, personal communication, November 6, 2017).

The government invested heavily in CAP in order to provide increased opportunities for career advancement for unattached youths and youths at risk. The high incidence of dropouts from CAP suggested that the administrators of the program were not achieving the outcomes they expected from their efforts. To address this problem, the administrators of CAP needed to understand the underlying issues. Suitable answers to the following questions provided us with a better understanding of why students dropped out of CAP, how equipped the program was to address student needs, and the level of preparation teachers received.

I designed my research questions in order to find the underlying issues of the program:

RQ1: Why do students drop out of the CAP before completion?

RQ2: To what extent did the experiences in the CAP satisfy the students' needs?

RQ3: How experienced and prepared are teachers in the CAP to teach adult learners?

Theoretical and Conceptual Framework

The issue of dropouts and student retention, as emphasized in the literature, was complex and multifaceted. The issue was complex because of the myriad of factors that caused students to discontinue their programs of study. One of the underlying factors that students grappled with before they dropped out was that the training courses seemed to have no relevance to them. Some dropouts declared that they found their classes boring

and uninteresting. Other dropouts revealed that they experienced financial challenges and that they did not receive adequate support from either their family, school, or community. Some of the dropouts even suffered from community violence, while others received employment before completing the program. Against this multifaceted background, I grounded this research on Mezirow's transformational learning theory (1978), which focuses on a method to help individuals identify and understand why people behaved the way they do and what evoked or motivated such behavior (Jones et al., 1972; Kelley, 1972; Pintrich & Schunk, 1996; Schunk, 2008; Weiner, 2008), and Freire's pedagogy of the oppressed (1970). Mezirow postulated in his transformational learning theory (1978, 2003) that human beings needed to understand their own experiences and not merely accept someone else's interpretation. Reflection on one's own experiences can lead to personal transformation.

The essence of the transformational learning theory includes the processes of autonomous thinkers on growth in their lessons. When learning takes place for adult learners, changes occur in both their knowledge level and in the way they see the world, thus the learning was transformative (Snyder, 2012). The teacher plays a lead role in a transformational learning experience (Chory & McCroskey, 1999; Harvey, Royal, & Stout, 2003; Pounder, 2008). As a leader, the teacher's role is dynamic and encompasses being a role model while also offering expert guidance to students, thus increasing their interest (Bolkan, Goodboy, & Griffin, 2011; Kearney & McCroskey, 1980; Robinson, Lloyd, & Rowe, 2008). At the heart of this dynamic experience, the quality of the student-teacher relationship significantly impacts the extent to which students are engaged in the classroom and on the quality of performance outcomes (Hamre & Pianta,

2001; Hughes, 2011). Mezirow, in his transformational learning, followed a four-point plan. First, he expounded on the forming perspectives, which he also referred to as "frames of reference." The learner develops new frames of reference from new experiences. The learner then adjusts his or her frames of reference or ways of interpreting the world, and then uses those new frames of reference to guide his or her actions, also known as habits of the mind (Mezirow, 1997). Transformational leadership is, therefore, about people being aware of their assumptions and those of the persons with whom they interact (Mezirow, 2000).

Educational leaders who practice transformational leadership can recognize and validate individuals regardless of those individuals' shortcomings. The educational leaders also empower individuals to think critically, think big, and articulate their thoughts and ideas, as well as to gain the respect of others and to become influencers themselves (Avolio, Waldman, & Yammarino, 1991). My rationale for choosing this theory was to promote improved student-teacher relationships. I also used this theory to foster higher levels of respect for the perspectives and experiences of others, encouraging greater student involvement in the learning experience, and inspiring students' motivation to learn.

The Relevance of Selected Theory

I selected Mezirow's transformational learning theory (1978) so I could focus this study on the aim of understanding the complexity of the school dropout problem. Mezirow, through his theory, assisted in answering the guided research questions mentioned in the Guided Research Questions section. Based on this theory, educators

sought to build the capacity of adult learners with the knowledge of how adults learn and with ways to facilitate learners to become independent thinkers.

Review of Literature of the Broader Problem

Search Strategies

I used several search terms and databases to locate articles for this research. I conducted an extensive search using keywords and phrases such as *dropouts, student retention, truancy, dropout prevention practice, dropout prevention policy, high school dropout, high school completion, retention, attrition, peer relationship, student attendance, school-based interventions,* and *school dropouts in Jamaica*. I used several online academic libraries that facilitated the process. One of the search tools I used was the alert feature on Google Scholar. I entered the keywords for my research in the relevant section, along with my e-mail address. I viewed many articles instantly, and I received other pertinent reports with the search terms and topics at intervals in my e-mail. I also used the Walden University Library and various educational sources such as academic journals on EBSCO Host, ERIC Research Complete, and SAGE. I continued the search process until I reached saturation levels. As I continued to search for information and sources, I knew I had reached saturation when I found the same content in articles or themes that researchers referenced in the sources related to my local problem.

Concerning the various search terms that I applied, I identified several articles. Each article referenced several other materials, which I also investigated. As the research unfolded, I consulted several sources that I used as references in this document. I had some challenges to keep track of them, and so I explored possible software solutions to

solve this problem. I selected Recite Beta as the solution to managing my references because it is reasonably accurate, is easy to use, checks the accuracy of citations, matches in-text citations with my references list, and alerts me to existing errors.

Factors related to retention and dropouts. The problem of student dropouts is dynamic and multifaceted. In this section, I discuss national dropout rates, why students dropped out, the responsiveness of adult educators, financial support, and dropout reduction strategies.

National dropout rates. The problem of school dropouts is a perennial one for any country (Freeman & Simonsen, 2015). Assessments of national dropout rates suggested that even with the most optimistic approach, there continued to be too many students who left school early (Tyler & Lofstrom, 2009). Researchers from the National Center for Education Statistics in Washington DC showed that for every five students, one failed to graduate with their cohort (Stetser & Stillwell, 2014). This high dropout rate escalated to become a global challenge. Therefore, through this medium, I explored how others perceived this problem and identified strategies that they employed to address it.

The expected impacts of adult education on the Jamaican economy was no different than those expected by South Africa and many other economies across the world. The economy of South Africa is heavily dependent on skilled workers. The authorities placed the responsibility on the education sector to ensure students acquired the required competencies that would boost economic growth overtime (Department of Basic Education, 2016). With such importance attached to education, the problem of school dropouts is of significant concern and has been the subject of several investigations over many years. Chinyoka (2014) defined dropouts as “those students

who left school without the school's consent or permission either to attend another school or to stay home" (p. 294). Mawere (2012) also defined dropouts as "those pupils who left school before the final year of the educational cycle..." (p. 12).

A senior officer of the MoEYI, shared with me an e-mail of an internal document in which the authors revealed that 8.4% males and 9.7% females dropped out between Grades 10 and 11 in the academic year 2011-2012. The authors also reported that the dropout rates between 2012 to 2016 academic years for males were 9.0%, 8.9%, 10.4%, and 12.2% respectively, while the rates for females were 6.0%, 10.0%, 8.1%, and 10.3% respectively (officer, personal communication, May 19, 2018).

Why students drop out. When students dropped out of school, to some, it came as a surprise. However, Tyler and Lofstrom (2009) stated that a student's decision to quit school did not happen impulsively but instead happened after a period of contemplation. This period of contemplation gave school administrators enough time to recognize and avert the problem before it happened. School administrators should be cognizant that students' decision to drop out of school were affected by several complex factors and is often the culmination of a long process of disengagement from school (Tyler & Lofstrom, 2009). Poor academic performance was often a strong predictor of school dropouts. Some predictors included: (a) low test scores, (b) course failure, and (c) grade retention (Tyler & Lofstrom, 2009). Students regularly reported that they left school because they did not like school. They declared that classes were not interesting, and they were short on financial resources. Some have announced that they found a job (MoEYI, 2016). School administrators should strive for relevance concerning their curriculum and teaching styles to make learning more engaging and interesting to students who were at risk of dropping

out (Tyler & Lofstrom, 2009). Some school officials have argued that students who became truants were rational because they refused to accept (a) irrelevant subjects, (b) ill-prepared teachers, and (c) the boredom of school (Shute & Cooper, 2015).

Responsiveness of adult educators. Fahey and Ippolito (2014) intimated that the way students learn changes over time and, in the scope of the issue, is a developmental process. The learning of adult educators is also developmental, which is necessary if they were to respond to the changing needs of students. From a study conducted among youths at risk in Quebec, Canada, many students disclosed that schools were controlling and restrictive to their movement. Consequently, participants felt utterly disengaged with their education (Castro, Lalonde, & Pariser, 2016). There appeared to be a disconnect between what the students wanted for themselves and what administrators felt was best for them. The authorities in Finland believed that they needed to designate individuals to monitor young adults whom they determined to be 'at risk.' This monitoring took place in publicly funded educational projects which students attended (Brunila, 2013).

Financial support. In the case of Zimbabwe resettlement areas, school authorities convened classes in makeshift buildings (Chinyoka, 2014). Settings like these were inappropriate and unwelcoming to students, and it was not surprising that some students chose not to attend. Chinyoka (2014) attributed poverty and financial problems as a significant cause of student dropouts in Zimbabwe. Parents were unable to fund the essential inputs such as school fees, uniforms, and stationery for their children's education. They were also unable to provide food, transportation, and textbooks.

This description suggests that teenagers were not prepared to access the education that authorities provide because the challenges these students face serve as barriers to

their access. Shute and Cooper (2015) stated that “when students turn their back on the education which the authorities provide for them, we must ask ourselves what is wrong with that education” (p. 65). The chances were that nothing was wrong with the education itself. To combat the potential issues with the curriculum, school administrators may consider introducing educational and social support to students. These supportive mechanisms may serve as anti-dropout strategies (Hoover & Cozzens, 2016). Students often experienced social and economic challenges that placed them in an adverse situation or position to complete school. Schools with large numbers of students who fall in this position were likely to experience higher dropout rates (Balfanz & Legters, 2004; Freeman & Simonsen, 2015; Rumberger, 2011). Students who took advantage of the available support services increased their chances of remaining in their program through to completion.

Dropout reduction strategies. Attempts to reduce attendance problems in schools required an approach that was integrative and practical. This approach supported a common framework based on collaborating with (a) parents, (b) community-based professionals, and (c) others (Kearney & Graczyk, 2014; Rumberger, 2011), and focused on the idea that one way of addressing the problem of dropouts in schools was through improved relations between teachers and students where the learning environment was commensurate with students' learning style. Both teachers and students were encouraged to strive towards gaining a better understanding of each other. They learned to respect and care for each other. They also have to know each other as one human being to another. Students who participated in counseling sessions were more likely to remain in

their programs to the end (Wilson, Mason, & Ewing, 1997). Some students shied away from counseling, even when it was available.

Opre et al. (2016) suggested the following approach, which some school administrators have adopted and applied in varied ways:

- Career orientation,
- Parents and caregiver's orientation and awareness,
- Parents and community partnerships,
- Gender relationship sensitization,
- Environmental sensitization,
- Entrepreneurship promotion, and
- Remedial education.

It is crucial for school administrators to partner with parents. However, administrators should be aware that parents may be demanding and supportive, demanding but not supportive, supportive but not demanding, and they may be neither supportive nor demanding (Larzelere, Morris, & Harrist., 2013). A child who experienced family conflict and who did not receive the support of his parents might eventually become a drop out (Blondal & Adalbjarnardottir, 2009; Ensminger & Slusarick, 1992; Lessard et al., 2008). School administrators should aim to know the background of their students to potentially mitigate any tendency of dropping out among their students.

Implications

Despite leaving school before completing their programs of study, some unattached youths, particularly males, can still secure employment in large sectors such as construction, agriculture, merchandizing, and automotive maintenance, with low levels

of education. Job opportunities for females are not as prevalent which results in more males being incorporated with the labor force than females (PIOJ, 2017). The labor force consists of 1,360,800 individuals, of which 1,254,100 receive employment, while 832,700 remain unemployed or are considered as being outside the labor force of Jamaica. The youth unemployment rate was estimated at 25.35% (Plecher, 2020). These unattached youths are prime candidates for recruitment into gangs. Some have already been recruited and are now engaged in criminal activities.

One possible project that might make a difference in the lives of at risk youths is to start a training program in one of the challenged communities with nearby manufacturing plants that would train these young men and women in the technical and employable skills they could use later in life. This training could be offered as an apprenticeship program, which would provide these youths with the opportunity to spend most of their time learning while on the job. This mentored training would allow participants to apply their learning and might enable them to earn wages while developing their skills. It would also make them less available to gangs or discourage them from engaging in other antisocial behavior.

Another potential project that may arise from this study is the need to improve parenting skills across the country. To address a parental gap, it could be advantageous to seek partnerships in developing and implementing a parenting program that teaches parents the art of parenting. If a program such as this is implemented, parents might be able to provide more excellent support to their children. That added support could lead to fewer children to drop out because of inadequate parental support. The most important influence on a child's life is their parents. The parenting methods utilized by parents as

they interact with their children have the power to increase or decrease the effects that poor living conditions and weak cognitive development in the earliest years of life have on dropout rates (Heckman, 2012). More than 200 million children in developing countries in their first 5 years were in danger of not maximizing their full potential because of the poor standard of living (Gertler et al., 2014).

Summary

After reviewing the literature on the problem of dropouts in many countries, I have concluded that school attrition was a global challenge. It was universal because it is a challenge that governments and school administrators in most countries face regardless of the size of their country or the strength of their economy. It is commonly agreed upon that economic scarcity is a significant cause of dropouts in many countries, but the presence of financial resources was not a guarantee that students would remain in their programs of study until completion. There are simply too many possible reasons students might have to drop out of school.

The growth and development of a country are heavily dependent on an educated and trained workforce. Countries with highly trained workforces generally experience higher levels of productivity and growth, and their citizens usually enjoy a better quality of life than in countries where the workforce does not receive adequate training. High dropout rates suggest that students do not stay in school long enough to acquire the full degree of training employers might require. The implication for the people of such countries is that the productive capacity of the country weakens over time. This weakened productive capacity often accompanies social problems such as high levels of crime and other antisocial behaviors. The main implication of these observations, which I

perceived based on the research, was that school dropouts failed to become productive members of a community because they did not obtain the required knowledge and skills necessary for many jobs, let along the specific ones that help communities the most (Opre et al., 2016).

The problem of dropouts is, therefore, not only a problem for the actual dropouts and their families, but for the country as well (Bridgeland, Dilulio, & Morison, 2006; Christenson & Thurlow, 2004; Dynarski, Gleason, Rangarajan, & Woods, 1998; Jerald, 2006). My suggestion may be different from the way dropouts are traditionally treated. Families and schools have to handle their issues with dropouts without being sure of where to go for support. Hence, the problem is left to spiral out of control. Now, students who drop out of school have trouble finding employment, which means the problem has become a significant social problem as well (Sum, Khatiwada, McLaughlin, & Palma, 2009). Dropouts who do find work are more likely to receive less compensation than if they had completed their programs (Levin, Belfield, Muennig, & Rouse, 2007). Dropouts also usually suffer from poorer health, are likely to run afoul of the law, and become incarcerated (Moretti, 2007). Children with parents who were dropouts run the risk of falling into the same trap as their parents by underperforming until they become dropouts themselves (Orfield, 2006).

Responses from school personnel and family members generally influenced a student's educational decisions. Aspects of the school environment such as disciplinary practices, availability of learning resources, size of the school, and pupil-teacher ratio significantly impacted students' decisions to remain in school or to dropout (Tyler & Lofstrom, 2009). Teachers are appropriately positioned to inspire their students to stay in

school until they graduated. The question of whether teachers were aware of their potential to influence students remains uncertain (Marquez-Zenkov, Harmon, van Lier, & Marquez-Zenkov, 2007). Those teachers who exercised care and set high standards for their students invariably contributed to lower dropout rates (Christenson, Sinclair, Lehr, & Godber, 2001). The socioeconomic status of families (Eckstrom, Goertz, Pollack, & Rock, 1986), the involvement of parents in their child's education (Rumberger, Ghatak, Poulos, Ritter, & Dornbusch, 1990), and the level of stability within the family (Pong & Ju, 2000; Rumberger & Larson, 1998) all play a role in a student's educational decisions. Demotivated students who eventually dropped out blamed themselves for not working hard enough, and they also blamed their teachers for not demanding more of them (Bridgeland et al., 2006). In a study based in Rwanda, teachers allegedly showed less attention to their students because they perceived that they did not receive adequate compensation for performing their roles as teachers. Teachers' responses to resolving their financial challenges have played out in the following ways: (a) many resorted to the phenomenon of teaching extra lessons for a fee or (b) doing less during regular class time. Individuals have made allegations of some teachers operating a personal business during class time or pursuing further studies during class time (Bell & Roach, 1989). Families and schools have therefore contributed to the dropout problem, even though they are well positioned to be a significant part of the potential solution.

Section 2: The Methodology

Qualitative Research Design and Approach

In this study, I used the basic qualitative research design to examine the problem of dropouts from CAP and the retention problem. Researchers choose this research design as a tool to assist other researchers in identifying the meanings people place on their life experiences (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016; Miles & Huberman, 1994). By using qualitative research methods, I focused on a local problem that occurs in the real world and captured data regarding the problem in order to study its complexity in individuals' lives (Leedy & Ormrod, 2014). Qualitative research is, by definition, exploratory. I sought to get a better understanding of the phenomena of dropouts across the island. The research questions suggested that I did not know the answers, and through this study, I explored the topic with the express focus of gaining a better understanding of the local problem. I chose a qualitative approach rather than a quantitative one because researchers who use the qualitative approach are often aware that there is little or no data on the topic. The researchers therefore use the inductive approach to generate information (Elo & Kyngäs, 2008; Hsieh & Shannon, 2005; Mayring, 2000, 2014). By conducting this inherently qualitative study, my intent was not to focus on the frequency of the problem of dropouts, but instead, I interrogated the rationale and derived meaning from the findings (Hennink, Hutter, & Bailey, 2010; Maanen, 1983; Merriam, 2009; Miles & Huberman, 1994). By pursuing this qualitative study, I derived a clear understanding of why many students dropped out of school.

Qualitative Tradition

Qualitative researchers place a strong emphasis on deriving meaning from context. I applied methods aimed at obtaining meaning from the background circumstances by conducting interviews, administering short online questionnaires in person with items related to the interview questions, and reviewing documentation to include minutes of meetings, e-mails, and reports (Yin, 2009). I did not get the opportunity to go into the environment physically to interact for fact-finding purposes (Hennink et al., 2010; Kaplan & Maxwell, 1994; Merriam, 2009; Miles & Huberman, 1994). Another critical feature of the qualitative approach I used was that the data I collected was usually in written or oral forms as opposed to being numerical in nature. Qualitative research is supposed to be open-ended and highly flexible (Hennink, et al., 2010; Merriam, 2009; Newman, 1998), and thus I designed my questions to focus on those principles. There are numerous additional ways of collecting data in qualitative research, such as (a) video recordings, (b) photos, (c) diaries, (d) newspaper clippings, (e) audio recordings, and (f) transcripts (Anderson, 2010; Yin, 2009). However, I found audio recording of interviews, administering of questionnaires, and reviewing of primary data to be adequate for the purposes of this study.

A qualitative researcher strives to answer questions related to the *what, how, when,* and *where* of the current problem for their chosen guiding questions (Hennink et al., 2010; Merriam, 2009). I could also have considered a qualitative case study design because such a design accounts for the fact that the actions of the participants cannot be controlled. Using case studies would have been appropriate because I wanted to gain a clear understanding of the setting of the phenomenon under study, and there were no

clear boundaries between the event and the context (Yin, 1984, 2003). By using a basic qualitative research methodology, I experienced several characteristics of qualitative research. I explored and developed a detailed understanding of dropouts. In examining the problem, I reviewed several existing documentations about the issue. I established a purpose for the study in answering specific questions. My primary mode of collecting data was by using words and not numbers from a targeted group of individuals. I then analyzed the data, established themes, and then reported on the findings (Creswell, 2012). I also distilled these characteristics through observations and interviews, which I derived from real-life experiences rather than simulated or contrived experiences in a lab (Patton, 2015).

Qualitative research is not an exact science, but researchers use this method instead to capture various research data by using collection methods that match specific characteristics. Bogdan and Biklen (2007) described qualitative research as being (a) naturalistic, (b) descriptive, (c) focused on process rather than outcomes, (d) focused on inductive analysis of data, and (e) focused on the goal of deriving meaning or sense-making from a situation. They further showed the dynamic nature of qualitative research by highlighting relevant terms and phrases such as (a) ethnographic, (b) documentary, (c) fieldwork, (d) naturalistic, (e) descriptive, (f) participant observation, (g) case study, (h) narrative, and (i) interpretive.

Researchers differentiated qualitative research and quantitative study by defining the underlying reasoning for each approach. Inductive reasoning guides qualitative research, and Wagenaar and Babbie (2007) explained that inductive reasoning moves from the particular to the general (p. 22). I used data from selected sources to improve my

understanding of the various reasons students dropped out of CAP. I also used the data to determine the extent that CAP satisfied student needs and to identify the level of preparations teachers received before teaching in the CAP or during their service period of employment with CAP.

Justification for Basic Qualitative Research Design

In seeking answers to these research goals, I selected the most appropriate research methodology and research methods for my research problem. Bogdan and Biklen (2007) suggested that the term methodology should refer to the general logic and theoretical perspective that serves as the foundation of a research project. A method, on the other hand, refers to the techniques that the researcher uses to collect data for the project. I considered possible qualitative methodologies such as narrative inquiry, phenomenology, and ethnography, but I found the basic qualitative design approach most appropriate. The narrative methodology is most appropriate for telling a story in writing or speech (Friend & Guralnik, 1956). Narrative inquiry is about gathering stories from people, interpreting, and then retelling them (Lodico, Spaulding, & Voegtle, 2010). Phenomenological researchers examine the meaning that people attach to their experiences, which has some resemblance to the narrative approach, but the length of time it takes to perform phenomenological research was not feasible for me. Ethnographic researchers focus on people in their natural environment, especially on how culture influenced the way they live (Lodico et al., 2010). Because culture was not a focus of this research, and ethnographic methods take too much time, it was not an appropriate research method for this study.

All forms of qualitative design are based on the basic qualitative research design and are then modified to add the necessary dimensions. I used the basic qualitative research approach because the focus of this research was on individuals who turned to education, not only to improve their standard of living, but to acquire new knowledge as a tool to make sense of their lives (Daloz, 2012). As the researcher, I wanted to understand how participants felt about their experiences in CAP. Human beings derive meaning from their interpretation of their experiences (Crotty, 1998). There are three things that researchers look for when carrying out a basic qualitative study: (a) an individual's understanding of their experiences, (b) an individual's worldview, and (c) an individual's conclusions drawn from the experiences. Basic qualitative research design helps people put their experiences into perspective and assists researchers in deducing meanings (Merriam, 2009; Merriam & Tisdell, 2016).

As I pursued the basic qualitative research design methodology, I sought to capture data on (a) the participants' experiences in CAP, (b) the meaning each participant attached to their experiences, and (c) the process of their transformation (Patton, 1985). By focusing on the process, I hoped to discover not only the base reasons students dropped out, but also how they arrived at a decision, which also varied. To fulfill my objective in gathering the data, I decided not to use a bounded system control over my participant pool. Researchers refer to studies that limit the number of possible participants available for data collection as a bounded system (Patton, 2015). I could not limit the participant pool because participants were not limited to dropouts, but also included current students, administrators, and teachers, which is why I shifted the survey from being based on the bounded system model as described by Patton (2015). Because

of the combination of participant types I included in this study, a case study approach was not appropriate either because case studies are congruent with bounded systems (Patton, 2015). By selecting this unbounded path for my study, I sought to answer three main research questions:

RQ1: Why do students drop out of the CAP before completion?

RQ2: To what extent do their experiences in the CAP satisfy students' needs?

RQ3: How experienced and prepared were teachers in the CAP to teach adult learners?

The methodology I selected for this study was a basic qualitative study design in within which I utilized case study methods. The basic qualitative research design is all about a search for the meaning and understanding of the participants' perceptions and experiences with the researcher as the focal point and instrument for (a) collecting data, (b) analyzing data, and (c) making a descriptive report on the findings (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). In case studies, detailed information is collected from multiple sources, often from persons who are experiencing the situations of the local problem and could provide pertinent information to deepen understanding of the case (Lodico et al., 2010). The “case” may be a single individual or separate individuals either by themselves or in groups (Creswell, 2012). Researchers categorize case studies as being (a) exploratory, (b) descriptive, (c) explanatory, (d) interpretive, and/or (e) evaluative (McDonough & McDonough, 1997; Yin, 1984). Each of these categories have their nuances that make them different from each other, while at the same time, they have similarities. Researchers must be extremely reflective in choosing the nature of the research to suit the context of the research.

By engaging the different groups of individuals in this research through purposive sampling, I sought to obtain multiple perspectives on a number of experiences related to the problem of dropouts from CAP. Purposive sampling is a process of selecting participants for a study based on knowledge and the value of information those individuals can provide (Wagenaar & Babbie, 2007). This basic qualitative design study involved selecting information-rich cases to study, cases that, by their nature and substance, bring clarity to the question or problem being investigated (Morse, 2010). I used the purposive sampling technique to gather information that I can now apply to influence policies and practices (Patton, 2015).

The key stakeholders for this study include (a) current students, (b) dropouts, (c) teachers, and (d) administrators who meet a few criteria. Patton (1990) affirmed that the rationale and strength of purposive sampling involved the selection of cases that could bring richness to the information, a richness that I needed for my research study to be successful. However, two of the most likely approaches I could have used were typical case sampling and snowball sampling (Lodico et al., 2010; Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). Lodico et al. (2010) posited that typical case sampling involves selecting individuals because they had characteristics or experiences that were representative of many people (p. 139). The snowball method allows researchers to focus on identifying a few initial participants who then refer others to the study (Naderifar, M., Goli, H, & Ghaljaie, F., 2017). I did not use the typical case sampling because my aim was not to generalize my results to a wider population, so it was not necessary to find individuals who were representative of the masses. I also did not use the snowball sampling because snowball sampling is a form of convenience sampling. Though using this method could easily

cultivate the number of participants I was aiming for, there was no way of guaranteeing that those participants would have provided the depth and richness of information that I desired.

My use of the basic qualitative research design allowed me to spend time with participants as they told their stories and perceptions of their experiences. This approach was crucial because, often, participants who were hurting felt that they did not have an audience that was interested enough to listen to their stories. They had to feel like this was an opportunity to share the details of their perspectives as they related to the local problem. I interviewed participants and recorded their views to ascertain dependability and transferability of the data. The stories and insights I collected revealed the uniqueness of each person's experience. Nevertheless, the stories also corroborated others' views related to this local dropout problem. This basic method of collecting the data, when triangulated with others' opinions and comments, added to the richness of the resulting data. Participants valued the experience of telling their story and sharing these individuals' details brought me into a vicarious experience alongside them. The relationship between researcher and participant needed to be a symbiotic one so that both parties benefited from the interaction, and my chosen research methods focused on facilitating such a relationship (Creswell, 2012). Benefits of this approach were that it (a) developed more effective recruitment strategies, (b) developed more effective research instruments, and (c) helped realized the more satisfied research participants (Mitchell, 2010). I chose the basic qualitative design approach because unanticipated information offered during interviews surfaced and was information that proved valuable to the research and served as the basis for generating the richness and depth that I desired.

During an interview with one of the coordinators, whose pseudonym is Vega-W1 in the research documentation, she declared that the administrators of the program did not view the students enrolled in the CAP as adults. At that moment, as she heard what she had said, it suddenly occurred her that the students who registered for CAP were no longer little boys and girls whom they had met 5 or 6 years before. She made a sudden halt in her speech and then exclaimed that they were young adults, but the administrators had not recognized their students' development and continued to treat them as little children. She acknowledged that the school administrators subjected CAP students to the same school rules as smaller children, and the administrators expected the same level of compliance with the regulations as they do from minor children. CAP students who failed to comply with the regulations faced disciplinary actions, which sometimes resulted in the students being suspended or even expelled from school on the basis that they lacked discipline.

One of the current students I interviewed, whose pseudonym is Canopus-W1 in the research documentation, explained that some students, particularly the males, dropped out because they refused to conform to the same school rules that pertained to younger grade levels. Canopus-W1 agreed with the enforcement of the regulations, and she felt that her male classmates should do likewise. In that “aha moment” with the CAP administrator Vega-W1, she expressed her fellow administrator's willingness to check their perspective on CAP students and to possibly devise new ways of relating to these students who were no longer children.

In addition to the methods already outlined, I used methods of interviewing that researchers have used before in case study research to focus on and investigate the

reasons and meanings behind why some students dropped out of CAP. Every student who dropped out did so for a variety of reasons, though financial challenges were a common reason given by most students. In circumstances where the reasons that they proffered were the same, the circumstances that brought them to the point of dropping out differed. It was necessary then to treat each dropout individually. I captured each participant's experience and examined each one based on its usefulness in deriving meaning from said experience. By using the basic qualitative inquiry research design, I focused more on each case and delved deeper into each one using interviews and questionnaires.

Participants

Selection of Participants

For this study, I selected participants based on their knowledge, experience, and willingness to share (Lodico et al., 2010). I emphasized participant understanding of the issues and their ability to provide rich information (Patton, 2015). I chose participants from four categories of people who were associated with the dropout problem: (a) current students, (b) dropouts, (c) administrators, and (d) teachers. I used maximum variation sampling to select participants for this study (Lodico et al., 2010). I chose participants who were as different as possible from each other. For example, I chose participants who were from both genders, persons from diverse backgrounds such as those from lower class households as compared to those who were from the traditional middleclass backgrounds, as well as those who had lived in urban areas versus those who had lived in rural parishes. The purpose of this expansive range of participants was to ensure that the selected sample was representative of the population and was not one-sided.

Selection criteria for current students required them to be a minimum of 18 years of age and be enrolled in a 2-year CAP course. They should be attending school regularly and should be willing and able to speak coherently and comfortably as they express their feelings in the interview (Creswell, 2012). Dropouts were selected based on their being (a) a minimum of 18 years old, (b) willing to speak as well as being able to be coherent and comfortable in expressing their feelings in the interview, and (c) dropouts from CAP who had been registered in the 2013 to 2018 course cohort (Creswell, 2012). Administrators were required to (a) be principals, coordinators, or bursars at a CAP center, (b) be associated with the program for at least one training cycle, and (c) have worked with CAP dropouts for a minimum of 2 years. Teachers who participated in this study were required to have (a) worked in CAP for at least two training cycles and (b) worked with CAP dropouts for a minimum of 3 years.

I interviewed one administrator from each center (see Table 1) to provide balance with the depth of inquiry about the experiences of dropouts. I used information received from the CAP Administrative Office to identify those schools with the highest number of dropouts in order to determine which centers to include in the study. I approached each institution I had selected about conducting my research, emphasizing the benefits they could potentially experience by participating.

Justification for number of participants. I selected a small number of participants relative to the number of CAP enrollees for in-depth inquiry using interviews and questionnaires. I contacted each selected person by using available sources of communication, such as face-to-face conversations and e-mail, when e-mail was the preferred mode of communication. I explained the purpose of the research to them, and I

asked them to indicate their willingness to participate by signing a consent form that I gave to them. I followed research best practices such as requiring participants' written consent. I advised them of their freedom to discontinue participation at any time. I assured them that I would not share their personal information with any third party and that I would protect their identity under a pseudonym known only by me. For one school, I did have to resort to an instance of snowball sampling, where I selected one current student with the characteristics and experiences needed and then asked him to nominate another participant, to make sure I had a large enough pool of participants to interview from the area (Lodico et al., 2010).

Although I set up an initial group of 25 to 30 potential participants to contact, I gathered data from a total of 19 research participants who attended interviews and participated in the in-depth study. There was no way of knowing if the participants selected would ultimately provide rich information. I set up appointments with the first persons in each of the four categories who responded to my invitation. I scheduled each meeting according to region and then interviewed all relevant participants in each area in a coordinated manner so as to minimize the number of visits. I scheduled activities over 2 days and slept in a hotel in the region. Ultimately, the extra time in a hotel was not necessary because I was able to complete all the interviews and administer questionnaires to all the participants from each school in 1 day. From each of the four schools I had selected, I aimed to collect data from at least one current student, two dropouts, one administrator, and one teacher. In actuality, I collected from school A (pseudonym), data from one dropout, one current student, one administrator, and two teachers. I included an additional teacher from school A because I was only able to collect data from one

dropout. There were two other dropouts from school A who had consented to speak with me, but they missed two of their appointments with me. After missing their second appointments to which they had previously agreed, I decided not to schedule any further meetings with them. From school B (pseudonym), I collected data from one dropout, two current students, one administrator, and two teachers. I gathered data from one more student and teacher from school B because I was only able to collect data from one dropout, and I thought that the additional perspectives would provide a richer supplement to the body of data collected from that school. From school C (pseudonym), I collected data from two dropouts, one current student, one administrator, and one teacher. From school D (pseudonym), I received data from one current student, one administrator, and one teacher. Although the administrator admitted that there were several dropouts from the program, she was unable to provide me with contact information for any of them.

Taking more time to clarify and refine the wording of my interview questions led to more effective interview instruments. Before I scheduled the actual interviews and administration of the questionnaires, I conducted one pilot interview for each category of research participants (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). I asked them to complete the survey under the planned data collection conditions to see how they responded so that I could assess the usefulness and validity of the questions (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). The more I went through the process of qualitative interviews, and I repeated the issues, the more I was able to clarify and refine each item (Rubin & Rubin, 1995). If the interview questions did not seem clear to the participants at first, based on the answers they gave, I talked to them some more to clarify how I could better ask the question so it would be less confusing and so they could respond better. I then adjusted the wording of the

confusing questions. After I identified that my interview questions were understandable and could elicit suitable answers from the participants, I prepared a schedule for the in-depth interviews. I conducted interviews in the form of semiformal questions.

Procedures to gain access to participants. I wrote to the MoEYI and stated my intention to partner with them and the CAP Centers to conduct the research. After I received approval from the MoEYI to begin my research, I requested a short meeting with the CAP director and her team so I could outline the proposed data collection strategy. The CAP Technical Development Officers are responsible for managing the CAP Centers across the island from the CAP Administrative Office. The technical development officers indicated to me which schools had the highest incidence of dropouts. I predominantly targeted those schools for the study, bearing in mind the maximum variation principle previously outlined. The CAP director sent a written notice to the principals of the chosen schools in order to introduce me to them and to advise them that I received approval from the MoEYI to conduct this study in CAP Centers across the island. However, their participation was not mandatory. I received contact information, including the names of principals, coordinators, school addresses, telephone numbers, and e-mail address, from the CAP director so I could reach out to these schools myself. I initially made telephone contact with the principals and coordinators of the various CAP centers and then sent letters requesting their participation in the research.

I then followed up by telephone to confirm that principals and coordinators received the letters. I made appointments to meet with them at their schools. I later visited the schools for meetings with CAP administrators to discuss with them (a) the criteria for participant selection, and (b) potentially suitable candidates that meet the

selection criteria. I then sought recommendations from CAP coordinators on which current students and dropouts they believe meet the selection criteria. I asked the coordinators to provide me with the telephone numbers of suggested suitable participants, which I then used to privately contact the students and dropouts in order to inform them of my research and to ascertain their potential willingness to participate.

I selected participants by using the maximum variation sampling technique such as gender, background, and address. I asked the potential candidates if they agreed to participate by giving verbal consent and in sharing with me their e-mail addresses. I sent e-mails to the current students, dropouts, administrators, and teachers to formally introduce the study and to send them the participant's consent form. In the e-mail with the consent form, I requested that they all read the consent form and reply by e-mail with the words 'I Consent' if they agreed to participate. I reviewed the responses and selected prospective participants.

The information I included in the letter aided their decision on whether to accept or decline their participation. From this process, I received agreements and held interviews with five current students, four dropouts, four administrators, and six teachers. In the letter, I gave participants date, time, and venue options so they could choose which options would work the best for them. After seeking and receiving consent from participants, I conducted each interview. After receiving each participant's verbal consent, I also audio recorded the interviews. Once the interviews were done and the participants left the room, I wrote my impressions in my research journal capturing significant points and any participant behavior I noted from each interview.

I conducted interviews face-to-face at mutually agreed upon private locations such as school libraries or conference rooms. On all occasions, I travelled to the site where each interview took place. In the case of dropouts, we met at the schools from which they dropped out. I used my professional network to gain access to school facilities such as the library where I conducted some of the interviews. I used school facilities that were clean, safe, non-threatening, and private but also not secluded.

I administered a short online questionnaire to all research participants immediately following the oral interviews as a means of securing their written responses to a few questions. Participants completed the surveys on a computer tablet I provided. I continued to maintain contact with participants even after I finished assembling the data. The most useful means of communication I used were WhatsApp messages, e-mail, telephone, and text messages. I used these communication methods to conduct member checks, also called respondent validation (Birt, Scott, Cavers, Campbell, & Walter, 2016), where I requested feedback on my written data related to the sense and veracity of their interview. While the administrators and teachers communicated with me by e-mail for member checking, some other methods were the only way that some current students and dropouts were able to communicate with me. To facilitate this continued access to these persons, I gave them a pre-paid phone card on their phones to use in contacting me and vice versa.

Before commencing the procedures to collect data, I sought IRB approval from Walden University, the MoEYI in Jamaica, and the local university where I received employment, to contact people in those institutions. By gaining this approval, I also won the opportunity to present the rationale for this study to the leaders of the CAP in a

meeting and to request permission to access secondary data from the actual centers and enrollment databases. The secondary data would help me guide the process of selecting dropouts to interview and schools with a high dropout rates to focus on. The IRB approval number for my research and project study is #11-20-18-0579878.

In soliciting support from the CAP team and the MoEYI, I sent requests early to allow enough time for response and engagement. I used my contacts and asked for an opportunity to make a brief presentation to the leadership of CAP at their monthly technical steering committee meeting.

Through the partnership agreement, I asked the principals and coordinators of CAP centers to share some of their records of meetings and any associated statistical information in the documents regarding the subject of dropouts. I was particularly interested in information from the CAP enrollment database, which is updated monthly to track the number of students in training.

Methods of establishing researcher-participant working relationship. As the researcher, I aimed to get the most information possible from participants. Conducting face-to-face interviews allowed me to engender trust and openness with the participants and to create a relaxed atmosphere that I could not have created with alternate means (Polkinghorne, 1994). The extent to which I achieved this goal depended on the nature of my relationship with the participants. I believe that the relationship between all of the participants and me was excellent because of (a) the participants' composure, (b) the freedom with which participants spoke, (c) the gleeful look on participants' faces at times, and (d) the general friendly atmosphere and ease of communicating I experienced in the interviews. I aimed to create a relaxed atmosphere in which there is friendly but

professional communication between researchers and clients. This stance was likely to encourage participants to be more open and candid in their response than they would have been if they were not comfortable (Polkinghorne, 1994; Renganathan, 2009). The research process included many moving parts that I needed to synchronize. I strove to maintain balance between (a) researcher, (b) participants, (c) the data, and (d) the context (Watt, 2007).

Measures taken for the protection of participants' rights. I was aware that conducting this research would be an intrusion in the participants' world. Because participants were likely to reveal personal information, I always had a duty to protect the rights and identities of each participant by minimizing their risk of participating and preserving their autonomy (Citro, Llgen, & Marrett, 2003). In the consent form, letter, and e-mail for each participant, I explained the purpose of my research in a language they could understand. English is the official language; however, in the normal flow of communicating, individuals interspersed their speech with local expressions, which I understood very well. As a native of Jamaica, I am fluent in the local dialect Patois and was therefore conversant with such words and expressions. Translation in the strictest sense was not required. Using the local dialect or whatever method was best, I also informed participants how I would use the data I collected. I invited them to collaborate with me in the research, emphasizing that their participation was voluntary and that they were free to decline my invitation. I informed them that if they agreed to start this process with me, they were free to discontinue the process at any stage in keeping with the principle of informed consent (American Psychological Association, 1981). I used several methods to further protect the confidentiality and rights of each participant. The

methods I used were to (a) not disclose participant names to third parties, (b) assign pseudonyms, (c) password protect my computer as well as any files containing the personal information of participants, (d) store written notes in a locked cabinet only accessible to me, and (e) not discuss with anyone the personal data I collected.

Data Collection

The data I collected from participants required them to be reflective and soul-searching. I sought to determine why some of them had dropped out, the experiences that had led them to dropping out, the thought processes involved in their decision, and the level of ease with which dropouts left the program from the perspectives of current students, dropouts themselves, school administrators, and the teachers. Such data included any support systems that the participants had at the time they dropped out, be it family, school, or community support, and the adequacy of such systems. By using the basic qualitative research design, I uncovered the primary needs of CAP students and to what extent program administrators had understood and fulfilled those needs. Interviews were also appropriate in finding out dropouts' perceptions of their teachers' level of experience and preparedness to teach adults. Additionally, these interviews allowed me to gather dropouts' descriptions of the experiences they had in-class and in the broader school community. I was also interested in knowing what kinds of activities dropouts had engaged in since they had dropped out of the program. While I gathered data, CAP administrators and teachers reflected on their own experiences as either contributors or solutions to the problem.

Data Collection Instruments

The data collection instruments I developed and used were the interview protocol, questionnaire, teacher qualification, training, and experience form, as well as the secondary data capture form. All collection instruments appear in the appendices in the following:

1. Interview Protocol Instrument – Current students (Appendix B)
2. Interview Protocol Instrument – Dropouts (Appendix C)
3. Interview Protocol Instrument – Administrators (Appendix D)
4. Interview Protocol Instrument – Teachers (Appendix E)
5. Questionnaire (Appendix F)
6. Teacher Qualification, Training, and Experience Form (Appendix G)
7. Secondary Data Capture Form (Appendix H)

I analyzed secondary data such as reports, the enrollment database, students' attendance records, continuous assessment records, disciplinary records, records of social intervention initiatives implemented, and minutes of meetings that I received from the MoEYI. From these sources, I gathered data with emphasis on identifying patterns of dropouts, attempts by administrators to address the problem, level of success in their interventions to stem the number of dropouts, and gaps in practice that the administrators identified. These authentic documents directly addressed the problem I am researching. I could not have sourced the materials elsewhere because no one had formally studied the problem of dropouts from the CAP before now. I also investigated the level of support that administrators and teachers received in terms of their orientation and training.

Sufficiency of Data Collection Instruments

I developed four interview instruments, one for each of the four groups of participants. Each instrument contained questions focused on the three guiding research questions. Depending on which group a participant was a part of, I administered the interview instrument specifically designed for their group.

I also developed an instrument called Teacher Qualification, Training, and Experience Form (Appendix G), which captured secondary data on teachers' qualifications, the training they received, and the experience they had with teaching of adults. The final data capture instrument I developed was the Secondary Data Capture Form (Appendix H). I used this instrument to capture other relevant data such as the number of students enrolled, the number of students in regular attendance, and the number of students dropped out, steps taken to reduce dropout problem, and the outcomes of those steps.

The information I received through these mediums helped answer my research questions. The interview instruments I created listed the guiding research questions, as well as any support questions that I felt helped the interview process explore other related issues in more depth. I asked detailed, probing questions to get further clarity from the research participants (Lodico et al., 2010; Wagenaar & Babbie, 2007). I developed a questionnaire that I administered to all participants so I could triangulate the data in such a way as to add to rigor, scope, and complexity to the research (Varpio, Ajjawi, Monrouxe, O'Brien, & Rees, 2017).

I used data triangulation by comparing the responses of each participant to the various themes that emerged from the data. I compared interview responses within the

respective groups of respondents, and then compared responses across groups. I also compared interview responses with answers from the questionnaires I administered. My aim for collecting and analyzing data from the different groups of participants was not to achieve convergence of ideas or responses. Instead, I aimed to achieve comprehensiveness or crystallization (Richardson & St. Pierre, 2005). I also engaged two of my peers to participate in the data analysis process without disclosing to them the identity of the participants who gave the responses. I began by assigning each of my peers a copy of the same interview schedule and then asked each person to code the same set of questions while I did the same. When we met again, we compared the codes we used for each question. The inclusion of peers added richness to the process.

Processes for Data Generation, Collection, and Storage

I sought approval from Walden University's IRB to proceed with data collection. On receiving IRB approval, I sent formal requests to obtain approval and local consent from the MoEYI and the CAP Administrative Office to begin this study. I also sought permission from my local institution for time off from work at the appropriate times to conduct the research.

After I received the required permissions, I proceeded to collect data following the stated data collection protocols. I began by scheduling interviews with each research participant I had selected. With the permission of each participant, I audiotaped each interview and then took written notes of salient points after each meeting. I transcribed the information from each audio recording into transcripts in order to facilitate coding and analysis of the data.

Data Tracking

I used several tools to keep track of data as I gathered it:

1. A research log to make notes and record details of any significant observations.
2. A tape recorder to document the spoken words from each participant, which I later converted into text. I also dated and recorded the time when I did the recording.
3. I developed a separate matrix in MS Excel for each of the four categories of participants. I then used this matrix to record (a) pseudonym, (b) documented sources, (c) dates of the interview, (d) locations, (e) questions I asked, (f) responses I received, and (g) relevant and specific reactions I observed to questions. I used the data I captured on the spreadsheet to (a) organize the content I gathered in the interviews, (b) analyze the conversations, and (c) analyze observations (Geisler, 2004; Koschmann, 2013; Zemel & Koschmann, 2013). Having information organized in this matrix helped me to better analyze trends in the responses.
4. An external hard drive where I stored research data. I then locked the drive in a filing cabinet, where I will keep for at least 5 years after my research is published, at which point I will then destroy the source data.

I also used secondary data gleaned from administrative reports I received from the CAP office. I captured data on two instruments, one titled Teacher Qualification, Training, and Experience Form (Appendix G) and the other titled Secondary Data Capture Form (Appendix H). In Appendix G, I added the captured data on the

qualification of teachers in CAP over the last 2 years as well as the tertiary institutions that they attended. I also gathered their years of experience teaching adults, the period for which they had received employment in CAP, the subject/skill area in which they taught students in CAP, the dates of any in-service training they received, and any other training that they received in the last 2 years. In the form from Appendix H, I garnered data on the number of students enrolled in CAP for each of the four centers I studied, the number of students in regular attendance, the number of students who dropped out, steps taken to reduce dropout problem, and the outcomes of those steps.

While conducting interviews, I asked participants open-ended questions and gave them adequate time to respond without interruption. I structured research interviews to alignment with the research questions, along with a focus on the purpose for which I collected data (Brinkmann & Kvale, 2015). I allowed each participant to express his or her feelings and to share their experiences without any external influences (Creswell, 2012). In my role as researcher, I asked questions and recorded participants' responses with the aid of a digital recorder or cell phone and in writing (pen and paper) as field notes. To reduce any misrepresentation of participants' responses, I asked follow-up questions and sought spontaneous clarification to any potentially confusing points as they arose. The goal was to document, as carefully as possible, what respondents said without distorting or misrepresenting their meaning. I also integrated the local Jamaican language, which was Patois, with standard English, because in some instances, it added greater clarity to our communications. As a native of Jamaica, I was fluent in Patois and the English language. I was therefore capable of translating parts of interview questions

to Patois for further clarification when it appeared that participants were unsure of what I asked.

Immediately after participants left the room, I updated my research log to facilitate consistency across responses. While interviews were taking place, I used the observation method to collect data on the (a) physical setting, (b) participants' behavior, (c) activities and interactions, (d) conversation, and (e) my behavior (Patton, 2015). By utilizing all these strategies, I collected rich data in which I have placed a high level of confidence.

Explanation of Procedures to Gain Access to Participants

As previously explained, I gained initial access to information on schools and principals by working through the CAP director and the CAP Technical Development Office. The letters of introduction sent by the CAP office proved helpful because when I contacted the schools directly, they had already been made aware of the work that I wanted to do with them.

At this point, I followed up by telephone to confirm that principals and coordinators had received the letters. I then made appointments to meet with them at their schools. I later visited the schools for meetings with the CAP administrators to discuss with them (a) the criteria for participants' selection, and (b) suitable candidates that meet the selection criteria. In one school, the principal was the CAP coordinator whom I interfaced with throughout the data collecting process. In other schools, after I met the principal on my first visit, I did not need to meet him again because he delegated the responsibility to someone who facilitated me. Regardless of whom I worked with, I sought recommendations from the coordinators of current students and dropouts whom

they believed met the selection criteria. I then gathered information on the suggested participants and contacted those individuals privately.

I selected participants by using the maximum variation sampling technique, accounting for gender, background, and address. I selected participants from the pool of individuals who consented to be part of the study. Then I sent information in a letter in order to aid participants with their decision of whether to accept or decline their participation. From this process, I received agreements and held interviews with five current students, four dropouts, four administrators, and six teachers. Luckily for me, I was able to schedule all the interviews on the same day for the school that was furthest away from me, so I did not have to make a second visit.

Disclaimer for My Role as a Researcher

In 2010, I played a major role in introducing the CAP to the institution where I am still currently employed. This institution developed into a fully recognized university. The management of this university fully institutionalized CAP into one of its programs, a program that is headed by an associate vice president who reports to the deputy president. I did not have any responsibility related to the running of the program neither on a day-to-day basis nor periodically, and there was no reporting relationship between that faculty and myself. The relationship between the CAP administrators of the MoEYI and me was strictly professional. Despite my current distance from the CAP decision-making process at my university, I have not included my institution as a center in the study to reduce any possible risk of bias or improper conduct in collecting, analyzing, and reporting data. Because of my early involvement with CAP and my understanding of the goals of the initial program, I may have been biased in the way I framed my questions or even in the

way I interpreted the responses. I sought to mitigate these biases by conducting pilot interviews and administering pilot questionnaires.

Data Analysis

I analyzed data while simultaneously collecting data by taking notes of significant events during each interview. However, the more in-depth data analysis began after collecting data from all the 19 participants I had selected. After I had transcribed and read the data, I conferred with the interviewees in the member checking process to determine if what I had written was what they had meant (Birt et al., 2016). I emailed the relevant data to the 19 participants to gain their validation of the authenticity of the data I had collected. After receiving their responses, I made few adjustments because most participants were satisfied with the documents and let me know that I had fully captured what they had intended to say. I then reread all the data, made notes or labels in relation to the research questions, and then uploaded the resulting transcripts for storage.

At this point, I contacted participants when it was necessary to clarify any potentially confusing responses on the questionnaires they filled out after the interview. I used the same process for member checking that I used to verify the interview information. I generated and uploaded a report based on the responses from the questionnaires, utilizing the Google Forms platform, into an Excel folder I had created on my computer. I used the same protocols that I outlined for managing the interviews and historical data. If I discovered any discrepant cases, I would go back to the field to clarify the information.

Outline Coding Methods

I coded the data on three levels that ranged from (a) open coding (level 1) to better understand and categorize the data, (b) axial coding (level 2) to seek out crucial relationships between concepts, and (c) selective coding (level 3) to develop the main codes for the research findings and themes. I derived the open codes from the questions I included in the interview protocol instruments I used to conduct the interviews. In each question, I identified one or more themes that I then color coded so I could distinguish codes from one another and to associate related codes with each other. I then grouped all questions with related codes from across the four interview protocols I developed. There were some codes that I treated as "stand alone" because I was unable to identify comparative codes in other questions. I assigned different colors to each code that stood by itself.

To better manage the data I had collected, I created an Excel spreadsheet with the headings question, response, and comment. I entered all questions I asked each participant and assigned a corresponding number from the interview protocol instrument for ease of reference. I then entered the response or answers each participant gave in the response column and then used the comment section to enter the various codes. Next, I used a pre-coded interview protocol instrument for the each of the four groups of participants and systematically reviewed every response to every question that fell under each of the three guiding research questions. I color-coded the words and phrases that were in sync with the codes I had identified in the pre-coded interview protocol instrument. I then entered the related codes in the comment section of the table. There were instances where the actual responses contained additional information related to

other themes. In these instances, I assigned the appropriate codes to those sections. I followed this process for all participants in each of the four groups who responded to RQ1.

When I had finished identifying themes, I found to be related to RQ1, I did a cross case analysis of all the themes that pertained to RQ1. I then repeated the process for RQ2 and RQ3 until I arrived at all my findings. If I discovered any discrepant cases, I would go back to the field to clarify the information.

Finding of Data Analysis Results

I predicated the findings of this study on these three guiding research questions:

RQ1: Why do students drop out of the Career Advancement Program before completion?

RQ2: To what extent did the experiences in the Career Advancement Program satisfy the students' needs?

RQ3: How experienced and prepared were teachers in the CAP to teach adult learners?

In gathering data for this study, four groups of persons were essential contributors. The four groups were (a) dropouts, (b) current students, (c) teachers, and (d) administrators. To enlist their support, I e-mailed an invitation to participate and a consent form to each prospective participant. In this invitation, I explained the purpose of the project, assured them that there would be minimal risk associated with their participation, and promised that I would keep their identity confidential. I assigned pseudonyms to each participant and each school. This effort was in keeping with my promise to maintain the anonymity of each participant. To make sure my pseudonyms

provided no hint at participant identities, I used the names of stars to represent each of the four groups in the study, namely (a) Sirius, which represented dropouts, (b) Canopus, which served current students, (c) Vega, which represented administrators, and (d) Rigel, that represented teachers. See Table 2 for the aliases assigned to each participant based on their participant group category and school.

Table 2

Pseudonyms: Schools, Categories, and Participants

School	Category	Pseudonym
A	Current Student	Canopus-A1
	Dropout	Sirius-A1
	Teacher	Rigel-A1
		Rigel-A2
	Administrator	Vega-A1
B	Current Student	Canopus-B1
		Canopus-B2
	Dropout	Sirius-B1
	Teacher	Rigel-B1
		Rigel-B2
	Administrator	Vega-B1
C	Current Student	Canopus-C1
	Dropout	Sirius-C1
		Sirius-C2
	Teacher	Rigel-C1
	Administrator	Vega-C1
D	Current Student	Canopus-D1
	Dropout	Sirius-0
	Teacher	Rigel-D1
	Administrator	Vega-D1

I substituted the name of each school with the letters A–D. These letters represented the order in which I collected data from each school. I distinguished participants in each category by merging the alias for the participant group with the

pseudonym for the school. In the cases where I interviewed two individuals from the same category at the same school, I differentiated between them by using the numbers 1 or 2. See Table 3 for the number of participants, categories, and gender.

Table 3

Number of Participants, Categories, and Gender

Category	Male	Female
Current Student	4	1
Dropout	2	2
Teacher	1	5
Administrator	0	4
Total	7	12

Findings and Themes

Data Analysis

I used semi-structured interviews, questionnaires, and primary data to gain an understanding of (a) the factors that lead students to drop out of the CAP, (b) the sources of support for CAP students, and (c) the teachers' level of training and preparation. I allocated an average of 1 hour and 15 minutes to each participant for the completion of each interview and questionnaire.

I collected data in a quiet space in the library or a conference room in each of the schools. I used my tablet to electronically record each person interviewed. I stored all interviews on memory cards that I fitted into my tablet, which I then removed after the interviews for each school were completed. I then labeled each memory card to indicate

what interviews were on which cards. I also made personal notes in my research log after each person left the room. Each interview lasted between 30 to 45 minutes, even though I allocated 1 hour and 15 minutes for each meeting. Immediately following each interview, I asked each participant to complete a questionnaire on my smartphone.

Later, my research assistant transcribed each interview into text. The transcription process began after I received a signed nondisclosure agreement from my research assistant. She accessed the interviews in audio format from each memory card. By inserting the memory card into her smartphone, she then listened to the conversations and transcribed each set of data to her laptop, which she then saved on a separate memory stick I provided for her. I subsequently read all the scripts on my computer and edited each one for grammar and structure. Next, I emailed the text version of each interview to the respective participants with a note to reiterate my gratitude for their participation. I asked that they review the interview documents, adjust them where necessary, add new information or correct areas that had not been captured correctly and, if possible, confirm that their interview had been captured accurately. One administrator and one dropout replied with minor adjustments, changes that were then made, but the other participants confirmed that their interviews had been captured correctly.

As I analyzed the collected data, I discovered a more in-depth understanding of the following significant findings:

1. Reasons related to widespread national poverty which caused some students to drop out of the CAP before completion,
2. The extent to which the needs of students of the CAP were satisfied, and

3. How experienced and prepared teachers in the CAP were to teach adult learners.

The details of these findings could help policymakers to determine more accurately the resources needed to satisfy the needs of students who enroll in the CAP. The details may also provide teachers and administrators with information to (a) better identify tendencies of students who might drop out, and (b) to identify tools to mitigate the incidence of dropping out from CAP.

Processing of Arriving and Presenting the Themes

From the Excel spreadsheet I created to analyze the findings, I followed a similar process to determine the themes. For each interview question, I identified one or more themes that I then organized with color-coded colors so I could distinguish the various content from each other as well as the associate related codes with each other. I grouped all questions with related codes from across the four groups to help me notice some themes that stood out as I saw what they had in common with the comments of other participants.

When I completed identifying the themes from all questions related to RQ1 across the four groups in schools A, B, C, and D, I did a cross-case analysis of all the themes which pertained to RQ1. I then repeated the process for RQ2 and RQ3. See Table 4 for the Themes and Coding Categories related to each research question.

Table 4

Themes and Coding Categories to Research Questions

Research questions	Coding categories	Major themes
RQ1: Why do students drop out of the Career Advancement Program before completion?	(a) Reasons for dropping out (b) Reasons for remaining (c) Tendencies in phases before dropping out (d) Life since dropping out (e) Alternatives to dropping out	Factors for dropouts
RQ2: To what extent did your experiences in the Career Advancement Program satisfy students' needs?	(a) Support - School and Teachers (b) Support - Community (c) Support - Parents and Extended Family (d) Support - Orientation	Factors supporting CAP students
RQ3: How experienced and prepared were teachers in the CAP to teach adult learners?	(a) Training to teach adult learners (b) Training to manage adult learners (c) Teachers' training (d) Teachers' teaching styles (e) Teachers' knowledge	Factors for teacher training and preparation

Data Accuracy

I ensured that the data was accurate and valid by pursuing a process of member checking and peer review (Lodico et al., 2010, p. 177). I sent each participant a copy of the interview transcript for him or her to review and provide me with feedback on the accuracy with which I recorded the responses. I made amendments based on their responses. I then read each interview manuscript and coded for themes. I then randomly selected documents for three participants and asked a colleague to code it independent of my input. The colleague signed a nondisclosure agreement, to keep with privacy standards. The results of the member checking were that both sets of codes generally matched. I derived confidence from using this collaborative approach to derive my major themes.

Data Analysis Results

Major Theme 1: Factors for Dropping Out

Each of the major themes I arrived at were related to the guiding research questions. From RQ1, I identified several sub-themes based on the significant comments made by various participants across the four groups. I labelled these sub-themes as (a) reasons for dropping out, (b) reasons for remaining, (c) tendencies noted in phases before dropping out, (d) life since dropping out, and (e) alternatives to dropping out. All these sub-themes have the common thread of dropping out running through them. I therefore categorized all these sub-themes under one major theme called "factors for dropping out." I have discussed each sub-theme related to theme 1 below in detail with quoted expressions or explanations made from various participants.

Reasons for dropping out. There were several reasons postulated about why students dropped out of CAP. See Figure 1 and the descriptions I generated from the data included in the questionnaires that I administered for the study.

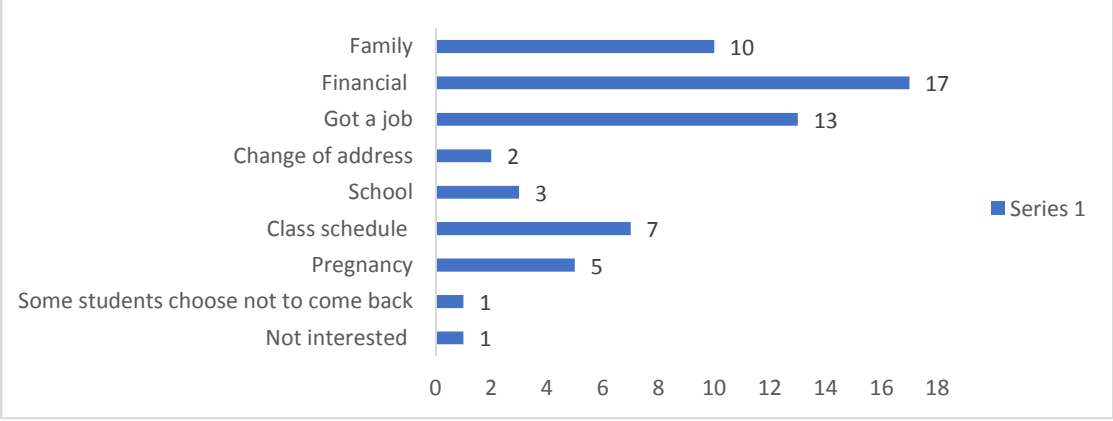


Figure 1. Reasons participants gave for dropping out of CAP.

Based on the figure above, there are three primary reasons that all participants gave as to why students dropped out of CAP: (a) financial, (b) students got jobs and (c) family.

Inadequate financing was the reason that received almost unanimous agreement by participants across the four groups as a major cause for students to drop out of CAP. In many instances, participants did not have enough financing to fund themselves or to fund other individuals for whom they were responsible.

Problem of inadequate financing. Dealing with inadequate funding is a real problem because of the prevailing economic conditions with which the people of the island must grapple. Of the 2.8 million people living in Jamaica, 0.5% were living in severe poverty, 1.7% of the population were living below the poverty line, 2.7% were multi-dimensionally poor, and 9.6% were living in near poverty conditions Living in severe or extreme poverty in Jamaica meant that there were people who live on less than US $1.90 (JA $244.44) per day (United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), 2016).

The widespread macro-economic conditions filtered down to the micro-level which then played out into the everyday existence of the people, especially such individuals as those enrolled in CAP. Sirius-A1, one of the dropouts with whom I spoke articulated, “I did not have sufficient funds to come to school, neither did I have anyone to support me financially to satisfy other personal needs, so I had to stop.” Another similarly poignant remark was made by dropout Sirius-C2, “I didn't have a strong family background to back me financially. I had to find the resources on my own to come, and that's why I did not attend school sometimes until I finally stopped.”

One of the administrators, Vega-A1, agreed that students dropped out because of financial challenges:

> I think the most pressing factor based on the students who have dropped out is the need for employment. Many of our students came from low socio-economic background, and so they need to find employment to contribute to the household especially when they got to a certain age and their parents decided that they were no longer going to sponsor them. Many students were living on approximately JA $244.24 per day which made it difficult for them to afford the necessities of life.

Crime and violence in the community. Rampant crime, a problem that is well known to be an issue across many areas of the island, was yet another reason participants gave for dropping out of CAP. Rigel-A1 affirmed, "Most of our students were from this community which is traditionally reputed for crime and violence, which could be factors which caused students to drop out of the CAP." Sirius-C1 corroborated Rigel-A1's comments by asserting that high criminal activities within the community were of major concern to the general citizenry and to his school community. He remarked, "There was a high incidence of robbery, even when they implemented the Zone of Special Operation in the area we heard heavy gunshots at nights." Then Sirius-C1 recounted an incident where a female classmate of his was almost robbed as he and she walked to the taxi stand at night. She escaped the robbery attempt by running away. Sirius-C1 went on to say, "Since that incident that night, my classmate stopped attending school, and I left the program also".

A senior officer of the police force shared with me an unpublished power point presentation which described the crime situation in the division that was referenced by Sirius-C1. I have copied a few slides from that presentation with permission and included them in Figures 2–6 to illustrate the magnitude of the murders and shootings for the years

2015–2017 in that area. The last two slides show the period of day when murders and shootings were most prevalent from 2015 to 2017, which included the times when some CAP students would be returning home from school (police officer, personal communication, June 20, 2019). In these conditions, most people, including operators of public transportation, tried to get off the streets early. The magnitude of the danger explained why Sirius-C1 reported, "I had problems getting transportation at nights to reach home from school" because classes were scheduled between 5:00–8:00 pm on weekdays.

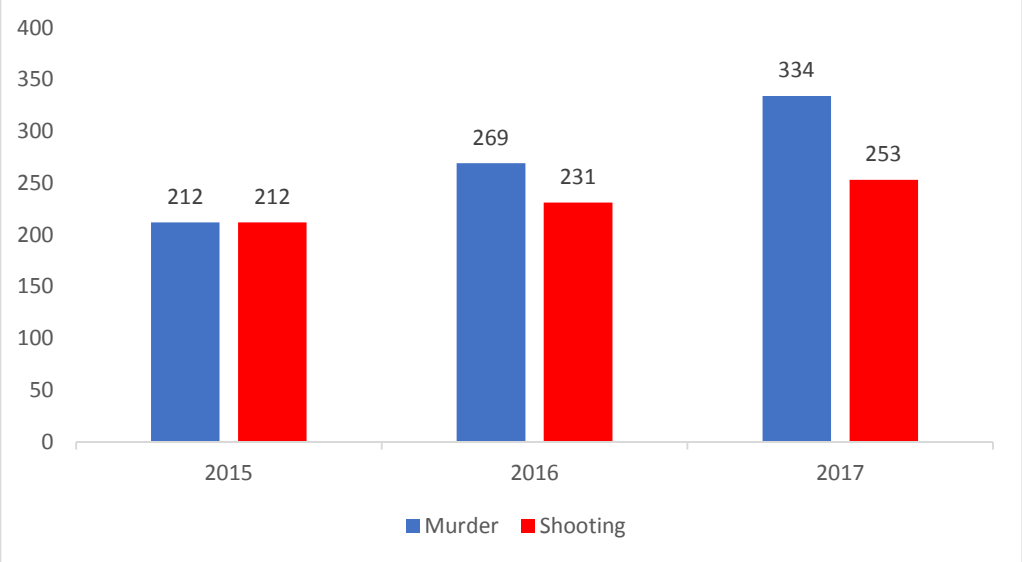
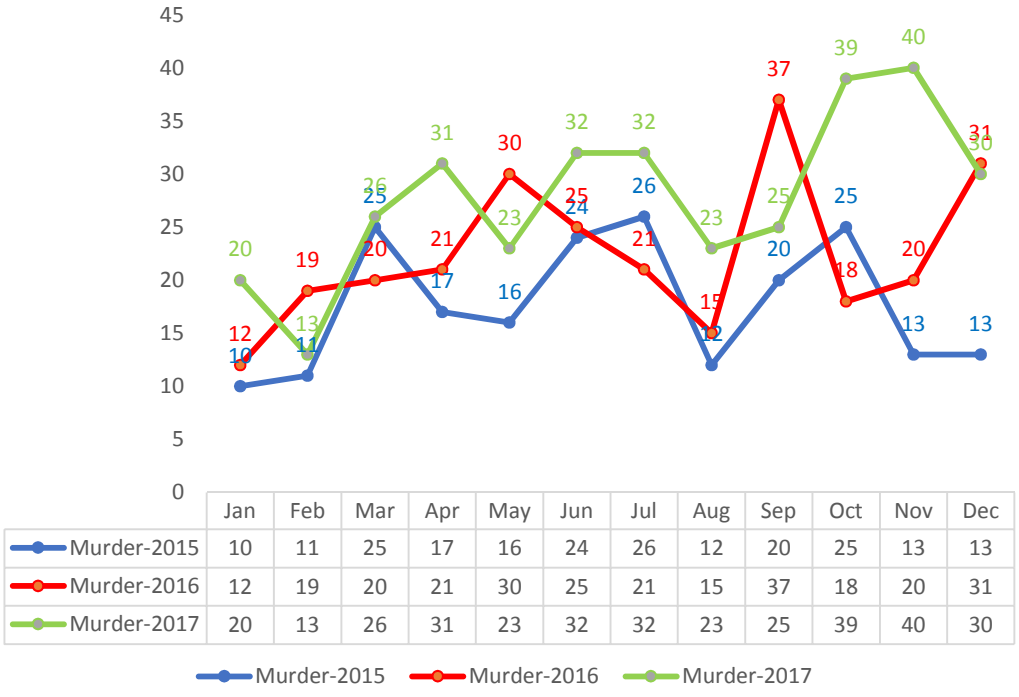


Figure 2. Murder and shooting for the comparative periods 2015-2017.

Murder increased by 58% while shooting increased by 19% in area one between 2015–2017. Area one comprised the parishes Trelawny, St. James, Hanover, and Westmoreland which is reputed for lottery scamming and gang warfare (Caribbean Policy Research Institute, 2012).



	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Murder-2015	10	11	25	17	16	24	26	12	20	25	13	13
Murder-2016	12	19	20	21	30	25	21	15	37	18	20	31
Murder-2017	20	13	26	31	23	32	32	23	25	39	40	30

Figure 3. Monthly dispersion of murders in area one between 2015–2017.

Murders fluctuated over the period 2015–2017 but increased by a 122 overall. Shootings also increased by 47 in area one between 2015–2017, as shown in Figure 4.

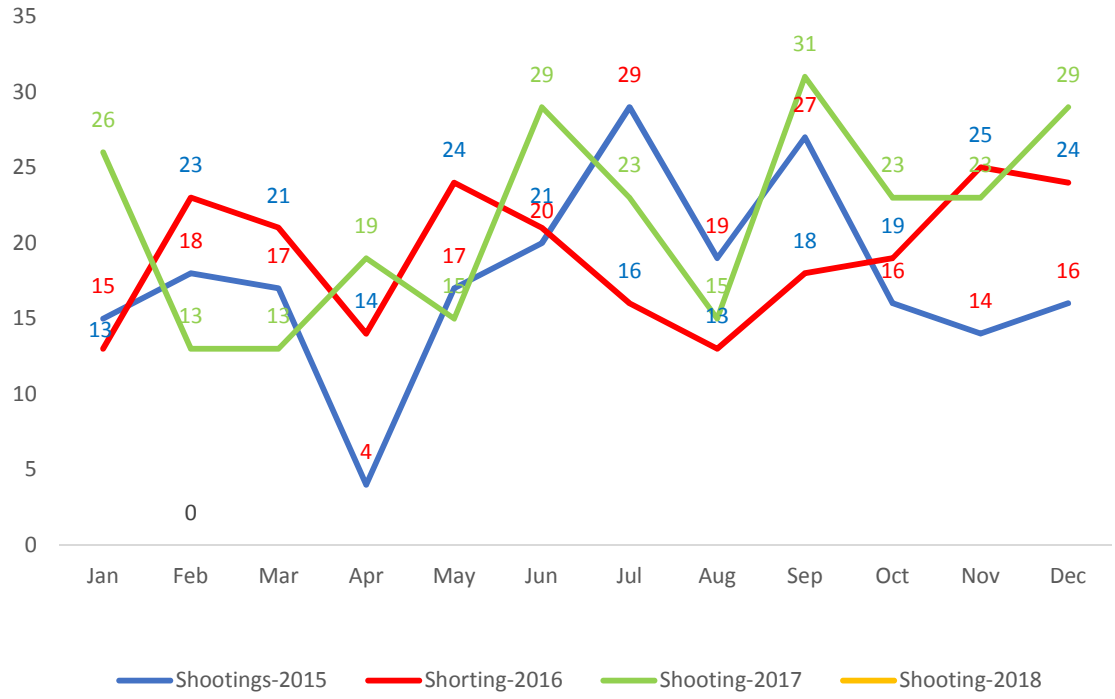


Figure 4. Monthly dispersion of shootings in area one between 2015-2017.

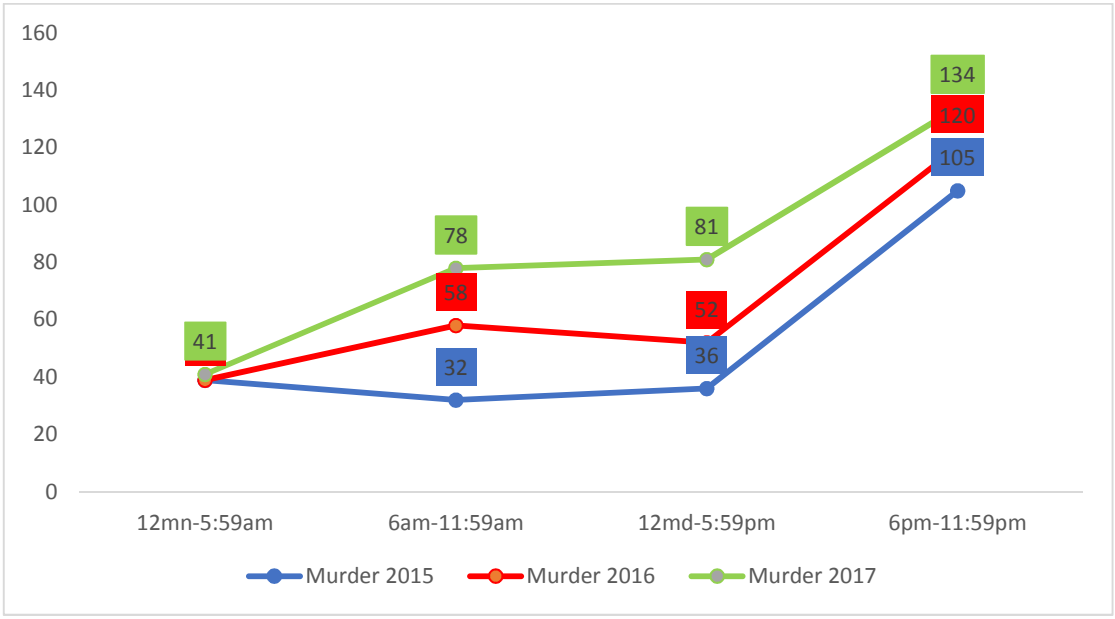


Figure 5. Dispersion of murders in 6 hr periods in area one between 2015-2017.

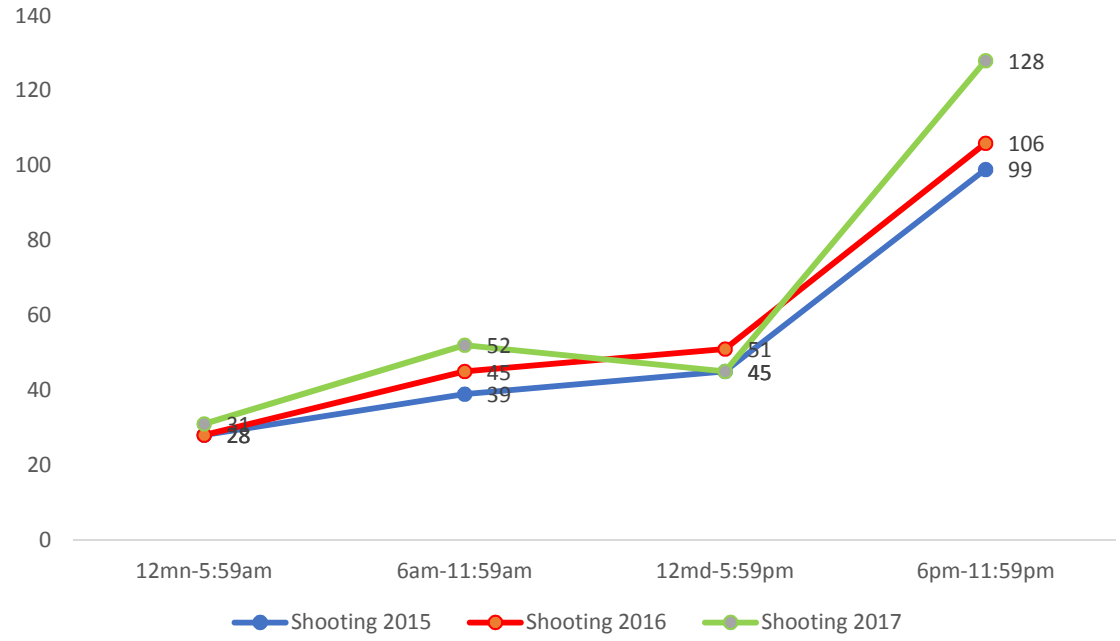


Figure 6. Dispersion of shootings in 6 hr periods in area one between 2015-2017.

According to Figure 5, most murders took place between 6:00pm-11:59pm, while Figure 6 similarly indicates that most shootings took place between 6:00pm-11:59 pm. These graphical representations of the extent of crime and violence in one region of Jamaica suggests that crime is still a matter of great concern despite the efforts of successive governments.

Negative influence from friends and other youths at risk. Receiving negative peer pressure another factor that students indicated as having an effect on their decision to drop out of CAP. Rigel-A1 revealed, "Some of the students will say, 'I am not coming back because this friend is not coming back', so they basically follow their friends." Vega-D1 recognized, "Sometimes you have a dropout who influences others to drop out.

Sometimes they come here because of their friends, so once that friend stops coming, they stop coming too." This view was supported by a dropout, Sirius-C1, who confessed,

> Since my friend stopped attending school, I lost interest and stopped attending school also because she was the one who motivated me to join the program, and now that she was no longer coming so I wasn't motivated to continue.

Similar sentiments were shared by Canopus-A1:

> Students who have a good relationship will influence or discourage them and tell them that school is not good, and then they both stop coming, or the entire group stops coming. Because friends were not coming, they do not see the reason to continue.

Rigel-D1 also described similar opinions.

Some students drop out to pursue other interests. One of the administrators, Vega-D1, revealed why some students drop out to pursue other interests or attend other schools:

> Some of them go and pursue other things. You will see them at different institutions pursuing other things, and some of the time they come here because they couldn't get in at the time, so they came here and as soon as they got into what they really wanted, they just stopped coming.

Sirius-B1 supported the idea that some students did not get to pursue their passion at CAP, so they left to study some other courses. "My reason for enrolling in the CAP was to do subjects and not skills such as commercial food prep." She did not get the opportunity to pursue her area of interest and eventually dropped out. Sirius-A1, another

dropout, shared this feeling of incongruence between what she wanted and what the program offered her as a reason for why she dropped out:

> I didn't see the need to come to school and learn something and when I go into the working world, I have to do it all over again as a learning experience. I wanted to work, but the program was taking too long to complete, so I was no longer interested.

Some students place a limited value on the study program. Rigel-B1 posited more about the ignorance or foolishness of some students who undervalue what they could gain from their CAP learning experience:

> They don't place any value on CAP because it is free. They have this "don't care attitude" if they want to stop, they can stop because they didn't pay any money to start. That is their mentality. The freeness of the program is a contributing factor for some of them dropping out.

The view that students do not value the CAP has also been shared by some participants in the Rigel and Vega groups. However, the students in the Canopus and Sirius groups were unanimous in declaring they placed much more value on the CAP. For example, Sirius-C2 pronounced "I place a 100% value on the CAP. I intend to return to complete my program and get certified." On one hand it can be concluded that there was a contradiction between the strong assertion that they valued the CAP greatly, yet they still dropped out. On the other hand, there may have been other more pressing factors that caused them to dropout notwithstanding the value they placed on the CAP.

Early parental responsibilities cause some students to drop out. Vega-A1 discussed the effects parents have on CAP students:

> Our social reality is that most of these students in the CAP were parents. Between finishing secondary school and joining the CAP, most of the girls become pregnant and were parents, so by the time they come to us, some of them were parents multiple times. So, the demand of school and their own parent saying to them, 'You're now a parent and you need to care for this child.' This now puts a strain on them. They now need to talk about a source of income. Sometimes they were single parents which makes it even worse. The fathers of the children were not around most of the times and even if they were around, they were not able to contribute meaningfully to support the mother and child or even just the child, which makes it even more challenging trying to finish their education as a teenager now and functioning as an adult. The pressure most of the times falls in lack of financing which caused students not to do well.

Vega-B1 supported the notion of early parenthood as a factor for dropping out by clarifying, "For the boys, early parental responsibilities caused some of them to drop out. They became fathers and had to leave school to seek employment to take care of their babies." Of the 7.3 million births to girls under 18 every year in developing countries, girls under age 15 account for 2 million (UNFPA, 2013).

Disciplinary reasons cause some students to drop out. Vega- B1 reported issues relating to the school rules that ultimately led to expulsions and dropouts:

> Some of the students were disrespectful and did not conform to the rules of the school. As the program administrator, I do not tolerate such rebellious behavior. So, if they were disrespectful to any of the staff, we expel them.

Vega-B1 demonstrated that expulsion of students was a popular means of disciplining students. When students were assertive, they were perceived to be rude. To better resolve situations like this, administrators and teachers could consider whether a student's behavior matches their developmental stage. Then they can ask if those behaviors were reasonable, and whether those same teachers and administrators were sufficiently trained to relate to students at or progressing through that developmental stage.

Canopus-C1 acknowledged that there were students who had disciplinary challenges by declaring, "Some of the students were rebellious, so I think administrators should improve control by enforcing disciplinary measures against them."

Reasons for remaining in the CAP. The following figure was generated from questionnaires completed by the 19 participants included in this study and describes the main factors that motivated students to remain in CAP.

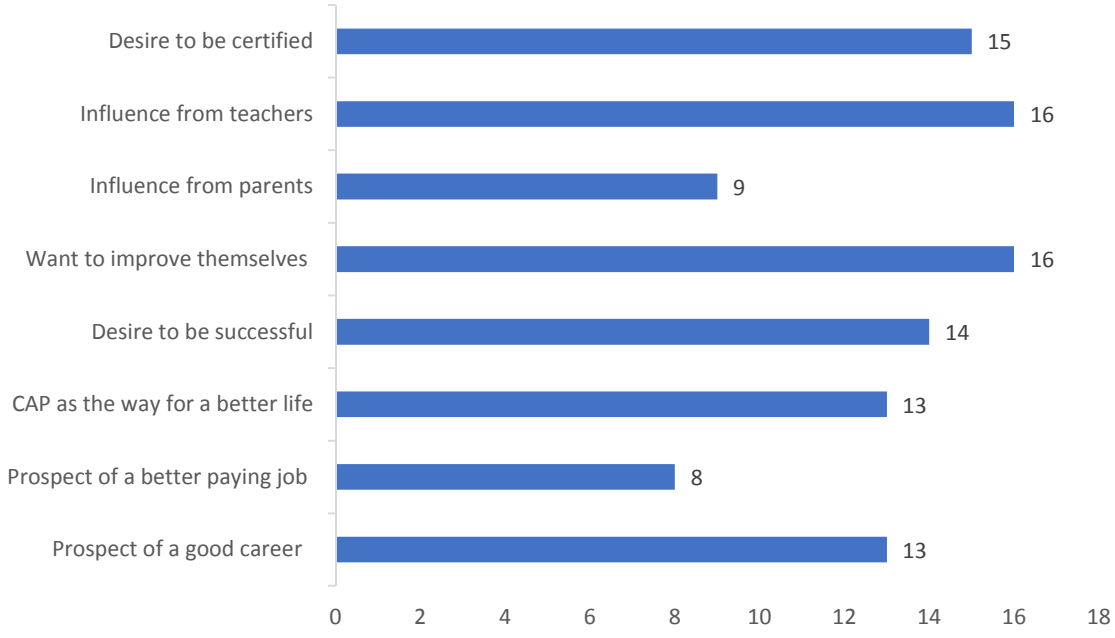


Figure 7. Primary reasons for remaining in Career Advancement Program.

In the questionnaires that I administered after the interviews, current students revealed three primary reasons for remaining in CAP which were that they (a) were influenced by teachers, (b) wanted to improve themselves, and (c) desired to be certified.

Although some students dropped out of CAP, there were some students who remained despite experiencing similar challenges to those who dropped out. I asked only the current students about their reasons for remaining in CAP. Canopus-A1 stated that he did not drop out of the CAP because he was determined to acquire a good education for himself. He explained that he wanted to learn a skill that would empower him to earn enough money to support himself and his family. He further disclosed that he was disappointed with his academic performance in secondary school which caused him personal embarrassment and painful emotional stress for his mother. He expressed remorse that his negative behavior and low academic achievement in secondary school caused his mother to cry, and he no longer wanted to put her in that situation. He also divulged that he was motivated to remain in school and to distinguish himself as a leader because he did not want to walk in the footsteps of his deceased father who, as he was told, hurt many people before he died.

Canopus-B2 and Canopus-A1 expressed a similar sentiment, with the former saying that, “The CAP is basically a second chance. I wasn't focused in secondary school, so I didn’t do well, but now I’m focused.” He also declared that he did not want to drop out of a program a second time and that he gained strength from the encouragement of his teachers to remain in the program. Canopus-C1 related by saying, “I remained in the program to make sure I can take care of myself both educationally and financially

because I want to be an independent adult." This response was also shared by Canopus-B1 who disclosed, "This is like a stepping-stone for me to achieve my dream."

Vega-B1 parted company from her fellow administrators and sided with the views of the students when she insisted,

> My students place value on it, my students want a change. They were tired of living a certain life, and they were tired of seeing certain things happen in their community and they want to come out. They want to come out of poverty. They see education as the key to coming out of poverty.

CAP administrators would be pleased with their students and teachers who see the CAP as way out of poverty. The administrators would be even more pleased with the efforts of teachers and students who were determined to achieve the goal of CAP.

Phases before dropping out. Participating teachers and administrators noted that students who dropped out of CAP were not one-off events. Instead, students went through various phases before dropping out. Rigel-B1 outlined some of the behaviors and noticeable tendencies or indicators students exhibited that they might indicate that they were preparing to drop out of the program:

> First, you might see less participation in class, easily distracted, then they might be at school and not at class, they might be missing for a day or two, then they start to come late and not showing any interest, and then you no longer are seeing them.

The responses from the other participants were similar. Vega-B1 was an administrator. She outlined what she had noticed, "They would have irregular attendance. They were to be here 4 days for the week. So, you will see them start coming 3 days a

week, then 2 days, then 1 day, then they stop coming." The fact that students went through various yet similar phases before dropping out may have been advantageous for administrators. Administrators who became aware of the warning signs might have implemented systems to mitigate against the incidence of students dropping out.

Vega-A1 outlined a system which she implemented to respond to students while they underwent various phases of dropping out:

> So, they may be absent for a day, then for a day or two and then three. What we do? We flag them. There is a mechanism in the program. Once they were absent for at least three times for the month, we know there is a need for investigation, so what normally happens is that the counselor and the coordinator normally start by placing a call to a parent or to a relative if it is that we were having difficulty finding the student. The purpose of our contact is usually to find out what is happening with the student to stop him or her from attending school. Quite often we were told that they do not have lunch money. What we have appealed to the ministry of education to do, and they have done that, is to put in a welfare program, so the students know if they have not gotten a meal, turn up and we will feed them, because the program already provides for the uniform and some basic resources for their classes. The CAP also supplies ingredients and other resources for their practice area. They know once they come, we also have a caring set of teachers ready to receive them and to encourage them. Generally, as a staff, we try to encourage them to stay to the end as best as they can. Despite the care which was extended to CAP students and the effort staff made to keep their students in school, some students still dropped and struggled to survive.

Life since dropping out. While some students may have dropped out to pursue other interests, not all were as fortunate. Sirius-A1 expressed more about the struggles in his life as a dropout:

> My life has been very hard. I am almost twenty, so my mother and aunt won't support me anymore. I have applied for jobs, but because I don't have any experience on any subject, I haven't gotten any job, so life is hard. I wanted to go to HEART, but I don't have any funds to go.

Sirius-C2 shared a similar experience "It has been a really hard moment, depressing moment." These declarations were consistent with the prevailing socio-economic conditions facing the island.

Alternatives to dropping Out. Students who dropped out were asked to reflect on possible alternative courses of actions which they could have taken instead of dropping out. Sirius-C1 reflected on this concept with a few comments:

> I could have gotten the notes from other persons in the class, and I could have studied on my own and be ready to sit the exam whenever the scheduled test dates were announced. Also, I could have arranged to have a more reliable source of transportation, for example, chartering a taxi. I could have also spoken with my teacher because she was always there for me.

Sirius-A1 also agreed that she could have explored alternatives to dropping out:

> I should have overlooked some things and not been distracted by my classmates. I should have been the strong one by motivating myself to finish school. I would have really liked to finish and get my certificate, considering that I didn't graduate from high school because of pregnancy.

With the passing of time, these two dropouts reflected and realized that they had alternatives instead of dropping out of CAP, a fact that had eluded them at the time they made their decision.

We are now aware that dropping out is a process and not a one-time event. Participants invariably demonstrated signs of dropping out before they did so. With more attention being given to the reading of these signs, teachers and administrators might have been more successful in averting some of the cases of dropouts.

Sirius-C2 justified his decision to drop out when he lamented, "I don't think I could have done anything differently because finance was my only issue." Despite his justification, he still maintained that he had intentions of returning to complete his program. However, the likelihood of him being readmitted is not very strong because participants are expected to graduate from the program at the age of 18 and he had already attained that age.

Major Theme 2: Factors Supporting CAP Students

The data that led me to the second theme, "factors supporting CAP students," came from the way participants answered RQ2, "To what extent did the experiences in the Career Advancement Program satisfy the students' needs?" Based on the significant comments made by various participants across the four groups, I identified several sub-themes which I labeled as (a) support-school and teachers, (b) support-community, (c) support-parents and other family members, and (d) support-orientation. All these subthemes contained the common element of support running through them. I therefore categorized all these subthemes under one major theme called "factors for supporting

CAP students." I have discussed each subtheme related to theme 2 below in detail with quoted comments expressed by various participants.

Support—teachers and school. Teachers' use of their own resources and the resources of their schools provided significant support to students. Such support has been recognized by both the recipients and the providers of the support. One dropout, Sirius-A1 acknowledged, "My teacher would support by giving me money, but I am not the type of person to tell people what I am going through. I would keep it to myself." Canopus-D1 related to Sirius-A1's experience, "They support us financially. If we did not have any money, they would give it to us. They also gave us lunch to help us with our homework." One of the teachers, Rigel-B2, confessed, "If I didn't have it to give out of my pockets when students come and ask, I would send them to the coordinator or to the assistant coordinator to make the best use of what is there for them." Sirius-C1 and -C2 remarked that their teachers supported them through encouraging and motivating conversations. All interactions, the students said, always ended with their teachers encouraging them to return to the program.

The themes of motivation and inspiration were common in the remarks made by Canopus-B1, Canopus-B2, and Canopus-A1. The group explained that teachers always used inspiring words to strengthen their students to remain in school until completion. The group said that teachers showed them the value of remaining in school and the rewards to be gained at the end. Canopus-D1 encapsulated the support extended by teachers with a few words:

> The teachers helped and encouraged us to see how important this program was and how far this program could take us. Teachers of skilled areas did their best to assist us to develop our proficiency and to get good grades.

Canopus-A1 revealed that "My teachers always said that it doesn't make any sense you drop out, and they volunteered to give us extra lessons when we needed it. They showed great interest in us and in our welfare."

Teachers assisted students to attend school regularly and punctually. Canopus-D1 noted, "Our teachers ensured that we attended school regularly and on time. Whenever we did not attend school, they called our parents to find out what prevented us from attending and offered solutions to get us back to school."

Regardless of the varied ways in which teachers assisted students, teachers were very clear that their primary role was to fulfill the learning needs of their students. Rigel-B1 told me of a strategy which she developed in response to the dilemma which she experienced to satisfy her students' learning needs and to retain them in the class through to completion.

I know it is my responsibility to satisfy their learning needs. I keep asking myself could it be that I did not grab their attention from the beginning why they stopped coming? I decided to plan my lessons differently this time around to focus on the theoretical aspects of the course during the first half of the semester and on practical aspects during the second half of the semester. In this way I can keep them engaged.

All the other participants in the Rigel group gave responses consistent with their mandate to satisfy students' needs. Rigel-D1 remarked, "I believe that as a teacher I can help to satisfy the students by catering to their individual learning styles and needs."

Rigel-A2 expanded the students' learning experiences from the classroom setting to industry. She commented:

> What I did to improve the learning experience for our students was to partner with commercial entities who welcomed our students into their establishments for agreed times and provided them with valuable supervised work experience as part of their training.

Sometimes during the interviews, participants would distinguish between the teachers and the school, but there were other times when participants would use those terms synonymously. Either way, it was evident that both the institution called school and the teachers provided support to the students which satisfied some basic needs. Canopus-A1 distinguished between the support he received from school and from his teacher by making specific references to both and offering words of commendations such as when he remarked, "I love my school. I am comfortable here. If it were not for my school, I would not have any lunch to eat at lunchtime, and my teachers motivated me also."

Sirius-A1, Sirius-C2, and Canopus-B2 concurred with Canopus-A1 in their responses to confirm that they were comfortable with their schools. Canopus-B2 detailed that he was satisfied because the classrooms and bathrooms were clean and comfortable. Canopus-D1 sang praises of her satisfaction with her school and teachers for a different reason than the others when she said, "They give us the necessary tools for each class." Rigel-C1 corroborated the response of Canopus-D1 by exclaiming, "The students were lucky because they were provided with all the equipment and resources which they need to facilitate their learning." She made this remark to illustrate that the needs of the students were adequately addressed. If the need for learning resources were the only need

students had, we could possibly agree with Rigel-C1 that the resources that were provided were adequate to meet all the needs of the students. The popular response, however, was that student needs go far beyond just learning resources, a fact that seemed not to have been factored into the program planning process of the CAP.

Rigel-B2 disagreed with the idea that the program is adequately resourced to serve the needs of students. She disclosed that the program coordinator initiated a welfare program to supplement that which was provided by the CAP because the needs of the students outstretched what was provided. She further disclosed that two students who benefitted regularly from the initiative, while it lasted, stopped coming to school when the school was forced to discontinue the supplementary welfare program. Rigel-B2 further remarked, "For this institution, the students make use of whatever support mechanism is available because of the background they were from the lower socio-economy society."

Support community. There was an overwhelming stream of negative responses from all four groups of participants on the issue of community support. Two dropouts captured the general sentiments of the respondents. Sirius-C2 complained, "I have not received any support from my community." This particular participant, Sirius-C2, would have tremendously benefited from community support because he didn't have strong parental support, and gang violence was commonplace in his community. But his community failed to provide the support that could have kept him in the program. Vega-B1 lamented, "They have no guidance at home. The only guidance they get is when they come here, but once they return to their community, they went back to the same level."

The second dropout, Sirius-A1, was scathing in her assertion, “I didn’t receive any support from my community because everyone thought my dad left a will and that we would have been financially okay. However, that was not so.” Sirius-A1 was from a community characterized by violence, which was the same as the communities from which Sirius-C1 and Sirius-C2 came. Vega-C1 agreed by saying, “Some of the students did not get the support from the community members.” Canopus-C1 concurred that she had not received any support from her community.

Some participants concluded vigorously that there was a disconnect among the three main socializing agents for children, namely home, school, and community. Rigel-A1 recognized this gap and proposed that there should be stronger partnership among school, families, and communities to educate and train children and young people. Schools were more likely to improve only through the joint efforts of educators, students, parents, members of their communities, and education departments (Bojuwoye, 2009). See Figure 8 and the descriptions that were generated from the data collected from the questionnaires that I administered for the study.

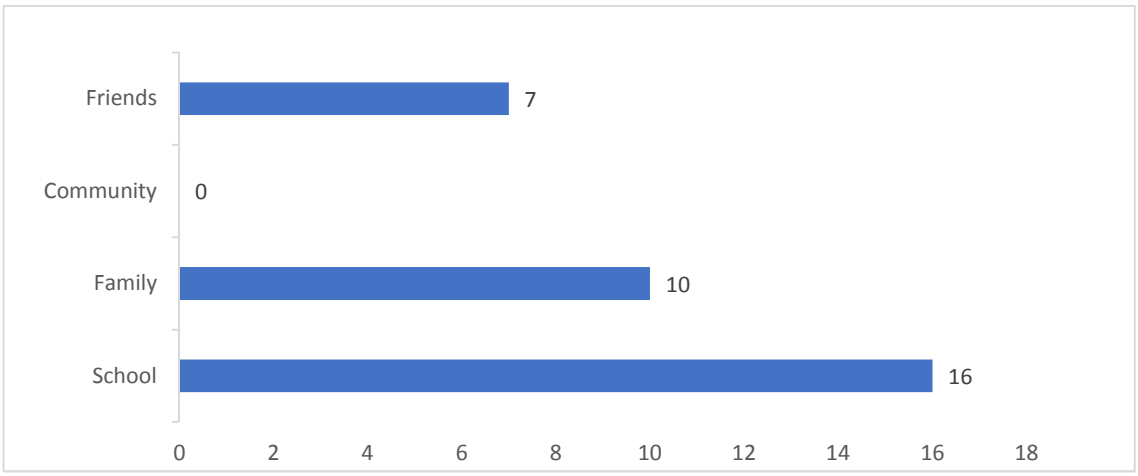


Figure 8. Reflecting the main support systems for Career Advancement Program students.

Some of the participants aptly described the nature and characteristics of these communities. Rigel-A1 asserted, "Most of our school and then family appeared to be the more acknowledged support systems for CAP students while community support appeared to be non-existent. Students were from this community which is traditionally repute for crime and violence." Rigel-B1 focused on a different characteristic of the communities from which students came when he alleged, "Some of our students came from communities which actively discouraged the young people from going to school." Canopus-C1 concurred with Rigel-B1 when he offered his statement, "The elders told students that school is not right and that it was better for the street." Elders were young men in the community between the ages of twenty and thirty who were unattached and at risk for committing or were already engaged in criminal activities.

Canopus-A1 disclosed that "Young men in the community were discouraging the young people by telling them that it doesn't make any sense for them to go to school." Vega-A1 described the communities from which students came as abrasive and that she

used that information to develop strategies for dealing with the students. In those communities, residents did not learn to settle disputes amicably. Instead, they did so through quarrelling or fighting. Sometimes these unorthodox dispute resolution practices were used by students at school. Rigel-A1 said, “Few students may get into a fight with someone from the community and decide not to come back.”

A senior officer of the police force shared with me an unpublished PowerPoint presentation, which described a community that was rocked by murders and shootings perpetrated by rival gangs since 2017 (senior officer, personal communication, June 20, 2019). Vega-C1 said, “Students were not able to leave the communities in which they resided in the evenings due to crime and violence.” Canopus-D1 concurred, “The community that I lived in everyone stays by themselves. When you come home, you just stay home.” Rigel-C1 asserted, “The community is not doing enough to help these young people. The community doesn't motivate its young people. Adults do not care about other children except their own.”

Vega-A1 offered a solution to the problem by proposing that “A work-study program would be helpful to our students because they could earn while they study. We would need to contend with the stigma of violence in our community and the reluctance of many employers to employ young people from the community.” Vega-D1 also suggested, “If the community could provide work for these dropouts, it would be great. We would welcome more community input and more parental input.” Canopus-D1 recognized, “We could engage church members and get the community more involved, so we can have more persons who were at home to participate in CAP to advance their

education." Canopus-B2 further expounded on these comments and highlighted the power communities have on students:

> I haven't heard any of the complaints, but to my knowledge, I think the community plays a significant role. The excitements, parties out there, and they were not focused, and they don't have the interest to come here. Sometimes I feel like financial issues; sometimes, it is hard to find the money.

Canopus-B2 affirmed, "Yes, it plays a major role as I said before—many parties and some young people find the parties more interesting rather than coming to school."

Support—parents and other family members. In Jamaican society, children rely on the support of their parents to transition from childhood to adulthood. Educational support is one of the forms of support that parents should provide. Some parents have accepted this responsibility and supported their children towards getting suitable education and training to equip their children to make career choices. Some parents, however, have not acknowledged their children's need for additional support, and they withdraw their favor when their children reach the age of 18. Many children then must eke out a living on their own without the support of caring parents. Vega-A1 shared with me the experiences of some of her students who lost the support of their parents once they terminated secondary school:

> Parents generally did not support their children beyond high school, so when you asked parents to help their children for another 2 years in the CAP, they found such expectation challenging to honor. Parents expected their children to take up jobs and start working after leaving secondary school. The parents assumed that once children completed secondary school, they should find a job or find a man in

> the case of the females. We had a student who stopped attending the CAP for a period because his mother required him to start paying rent for the room which he occupied all his life. He had to drop out of school and seek employment. That's the stark reality that these young people face. Parents tell them, "I'm done with you", meaning that the parents were no longer responsible for the children once they terminate secondary school. Many students access the CAP independently and not necessarily with the support of their parents. Parents expect them to start contributing to the household. They were not supporting them, and that's one of the factors that cause students to drop out.

Rigel-B2 concurred with Rigel-A1, agreeing that some parents would withdraw their support once their children reached a certain age by saying, "Some students say that their parents declared that the children were now of the age when they have to shoulder their responsibilities."

Vega-A1 agreed with her colleagues when she affirmed, "Parents expect 18-year-old children to start contributing to the household and have cut off financial support from their children." The consequence of such actions is that these young people invariably quit school to seek early employment. At this stage of their lives, their skill and qualification levels only qualify them for entry-level positions, positions that can only earn minimum wages. The national minimum wage is the lowest weekly remuneration payable to workers by their employers. The payments per 40-hour work week in 2019 was JA $7,000.00 for regular workers and JA $9,700.00 for industrial security guards (Jamaican Information Service, 2018). The wages earned by ordinary workers meant that

they would not be able to afford to purchase the national basket of goods and services for the entire month.

Vega-A1 contextualized the magnitude of the challenge of not having enough support from parents or other family members:

> Our social reality is that most of these students in the CAP were parents. Between finishing secondary school and joining the CAP, most of the girls become pregnant and were parents, so by the time they come to us, some of them were parents multiple times. Thus, the demand was realistic for the school and for their parents saying to them, "You're now a parent, and you need to care for this child." This situation now put a strain on students who found themselves in this situation. They now need a source of income. Sometimes they were single parents who found their situations to be even worse. The fathers of the children were not usually around. Also, if they were about, they were not able to contribute meaningfully to support the mother and child or even just the child, which makes it even more challenging for these girls trying to finish their education as a teenager now but learning to function as an adult. The pressure of the financial part of their reality most times could cause them not to do well in school.

Current students and dropouts also shared their perspectives and experiences relating to the issue of support from parents and other family members. Sirius-C1 confessed to receiving a complete lack of parental support:

> My parents were not involved in my schooling. They did not care if I went to school. My father provided me with financial support, but he did not check my schoolwork, and neither parents came to collect my school report. Also, I did not

> receive any help from my extended family. My parents and extended family did not come to my graduation, which made me unhappy because the parents and other family members of all my classmates were there except mine.

Sirius-C2, another dropout, also shared a similar experience of not receiving support from his parents when he said, “They weren't in my life at that time. Financial wise, I was the only one financing myself since I was in grade nine because my parents were retired and unable to work.” I construed that the lack of parental support in this case was genuine because the parents were unable to work. This case differed from those parents who could provide support but refused because their children were now of age.

Canopus-C1 described a different scenario of not receiving support from his parents. His problem was not a financial one. His mother, with whom he lived, was employed and seemed to have been intimately involved in her work and found no time to become involved in her son's life. Canopus-C1 lamented, “My parents were not involved in my schooling. My mother has to work, and my father works overseas and sends money.” This revelation brought home the point that parental support is not only in the form of finance. Some parents have provided financial support but were not involved personally in their children's lives. In this context, children such as Canopus-C1 conclude that they have not received any help from their parents.

Support—orientation. All CAP staff and students should be aware of the rules of engagement relating to the program. An essential requirement of the program is that orientation exercises take place for all new staff, one for all newly enrolled students, and one for all returning students. I received responses about orientation from three of the four groups of participants. The groups included dropouts, teachers, and administrators.

All respondents agreed that first-year students received orientation into the program. Yet, no one made mention of any orientation being offered for the second-year students. Neither was there any mention of orientation for the staff, all of which are required in the CAP Operations guidelines manual (MoEYI, 2017a).

The respondents appeared unsure of the number of days that student orientation lasted. Vega-B1 declared, "We had 3 days orientation. Vega- A1 explained, "We have formal orientation over 2 days." Rigel-A1stated, "We had at least a day for the orientation for the CAP students." These periods offered by participants varied from the documented standard, which outlined that "The educational provider shall convene orientation for a minimum of 4 days for year one students and 2 to 3 days for students in year two of the program." (MoEYI, 2017a, p. 72).

Vega-A1 appeared to have been a strong proponent of orientations as she leapt into a depiction of the fact that administrators used 2-day orientation exercises to prepare students to enter the program. However, she noted that orientation was ongoing. She admitted that there were many things in the tool kit that have been useful, such as the rules and regulations, orientation activity guides, and sometimes resource persons from the CAP office who came in and shared with them how to enrich the process. Despite Vega-A1''s comments about the orientation program, her comments only referred to student orientation for incoming first-year students. There was no reference made to orientation for new teachers or for returning students.

Orientation tool kit. All except one of the respondents in the teacher and administrator groups admitted that they were aware of the orientation tool kit. In some cases, I formed the impression that participants were only mildly aware of the tool kit,

lacking a more in-depth knowledge of how the contents of the tool kit might be utilized. Rigel-A2 revealed, “I am aware of it because over the years, I have seen the orientation tool kit.” Rigel-A1 declared, “I am not aware of any documents that the students receive when they come to orientation. I am not sure what is in the tool kit, so I cannot speak to that.” Vega-A1 appeared familiar with the tool kit. She confessed that they had not used the kit abundantly when she announced, “For me, the orientation tool kit was adequate. We practice ongoing orientation. We prepare students for the working world, so we used our initiative, so the tool kit was adequate for us.”

Vega-D1, supported by Vega-B1, expressed awareness and explained the relevance of the tool kit:

> I am aware of the orientation tool kit because we have to do a checklist from it. We require students to sign the checklist, which we then place on their respective files as evidence that we did what is on the checklist.

The administrators of the CAP used the checklist in conjunction with the CAP Operations Guidelines Manual, (p. 72).

Focus of orientation. There seemed to have been agreement among the respondents regarding the purpose of the students' orientation. Rigel-B2 expounded, “We expose students to the requirements of the program and how we expect them to conduct themselves.” Rigel-A1, supported by Vega-C1, concurred, “We let our new students know what we expected of them. We advise them of the rules and regulations, what we would provide for them, and we showed them how to get around the campus.” Rigel-C1 added, “We told our new students what we required of them, and we often invited different speakers who came and talked with them during the orientation session.” Vega-

D1 was the only one who emphasized any focus on support systems that were in place for the students.

Areas for improvement. Two of the respondents suggested ways in which the administration could improve students' orientation. Rigel-B2 postulated that administrators include past students from the program who might serve as role models for current students to emulate. However, Vega-D1 suggested that more individuals from the MoEYI should get involved in orientation exercises.

Dropouts' orientation experience. Two dropouts shared their perceptions of the orientation experience. Sirius-C2 testified to the motivation that can come from these orientation sessions:

> The orientation sounded very good, and it seemed like administrators and presenters were serious about CAP. They came out in large numbers and presented their information in detail and with clarity. I was impressed, and I left there with an excellent feeling.

Sirius-C2 chimed in, “It was good they spoke to us about many areas relating to the CAP. They gave us a full tour of the school facilities. Different teachers addressed us.”

Sirius-C1 shared a different experience and explained, “I didn't get any orientation. They only told me that the program was for 1 year. They also told me when I would have classes.” This experience was not in keeping with CAP requirements, which mandated that all students received an orientation each year, which prepared them to adjust comfortably to the physical environment and mentally to better relate to the program of study.

Major Theme 3: Factors for Teacher Training and Preparation

From RQ3, "How experienced and prepared were teachers in the CAP to teach adult learners?" I identified several subthemes based on significant comments made by a number of participants across the four groups. I labeled these subthemes as (a) training to teach adult learners (b) training to manage adult learners, (c) teachers' training, (d) teachers' teaching styles and, (e) teachers' knowledge. All these subthemes relate to teacher preparation and training to teach adult learners. I, therefore, categorized all these subthemes under one major theme called "factors for teacher training and preparation." I discuss each subtheme below as it relates to major theme 3 utilizing details from quoted expressions or explanations made by various participants.

Training to teach adult learners. One of the most startling revelations some of the teachers made was that the students whom they taught in the CAP were now adults. Many CAP teachers had been acquainted with their students since the students were age 12 or younger and had not realized that the students were now adults. In one discussion, Vega-D1 remarked, "We don't consider our children to be adult learners." CAP incorporates students between age 16 and 18, and some students remained in the program until age 18. All six teachers overwhelmingly admitted that they needed training in ways to teach adults. Rigel-B1 remarked, "I think teachers should receive training in adult education because not all teachers understood that because the students were seventeen or eighteen, their learning pattern was different and therefore ought not to be taught the same way as children."

Rigel-A2, Rigel-C1, and Vega-C1 concurred with these remarks. Vega-A1, supported by Vega-B1, did not merely agree but vociferously remarked that the CAP

teachers needed to receive training in adult education. They shared that the CAP teachers needed a strategy designed to value, respect, and incorporate the knowledge and experiences of their students, not just strategies for imparting knowledge. I described the approach shared by Vega-A1 as transformational compared to the views commonly held by other island teachers. “Transformational teaching involves creating dynamic relationships between teachers, students, and a shared body of knowledge to promote student learning and personal growth” (Slavick & Zimbardo, 2012, p. 571). Slavick and Zimbardo (2012) further explained that learning could be transformational when teachers and learners have a shared vision, especially when students can experience the desired standard of performance required by a program. If that can be achieved, students can be encouraged to pursue continuous learning and feedback beyond the physical classroom space.

The Director of CAP explained that the organization had invested heavily in building capacity among teachers so that they might be more effective in the classroom (director, personal communication, July 31, 2019). Rigel-B1 supported the director's claim by admitting that she received training to boost her effectiveness in the classroom. Rigel-A1, Rigel-A2. Rigel-C1, Rigel-D1, and Vega-B1 all declared that they had not received any training. Rigel-A1 pronounced that based on her years of experience teaching high school students and adults, she was satisfied that she had enough experience to teach CAP students. Rigel-D1 differed from Rigel-A1 by affirming that it was important for teachers to receive the requisite training to equip teachers with better strategies to deal with and cater to the learning needs of adult learners. Rigel-D1 further conceded that except for the City and Guilds workshops, she was not aware of any CAP

training provided for the teachers. Vega-C1 noted that some teachers attended the NCTVET Workshops. Both workshops for the City and Guilds and NCTVET were content-related and had a bias towards equipping teachers to more effectively prepare their students for the respective examinations.

Training to manage adult learners. By law, Jamaica's age of adulthood is 18, and the age of consent is 16. The developers of CAP catered to the education and training needs of young people between the ages of 16 and 18. At these ages, students would have either been near or would have completed 5 years of secondary school. CAP operates in many secondary schools where students attended during their earlier 5 years. The students then returned to their secondary school and received lessons from their teachers who taught them during their formative years.

Given that most CAP teachers did not receive training to teach and manage adult students, the developers of CAP produced an operations manual that, if followed, would guide teachers on what to do to manage adult students. The framers of this manual intended to reorient and aid the CAP teachers and administrators in ways to treat the CAP learners. One of the critical functionaries named in the manual was the school coordinator, whom I included in this study as part of the administrator group. The role of the school coordinator (administrator) was substantial because each incumbent was responsible for the proper functioning of all areas of CAP in each school. A good understanding of their roles and responsibilities helps administrators and teachers to quickly attend to the needs of their students, possibly reducing the incidence of dropouts from the CAP. The full job function found in the MoEYI CAP Operations Guidelines Manual, supports this assertion (2017a, p. 50).

All the administrators at the four CAP schools I included in this study admitted that they received at least one copy of the CAP Operations Guidelines Manual (MoEYI, 2017a), although they had not followed it strictly. Although the developers of the CAP manual tried to create a beneficial document, they did not acknowledge that many of the CAP students were adult learners. Vega-D1 declared, “We don't consider our children to be adult learners.” Rigel-B1 also did not see her students as adults and noted that the experiences she had with her CAP students were like the experiences she had with her grade eleven students. Rigel-B1 then concluded, “I don't consider them to be adult learners. They were teenage learners.” Rigel-C1, Vega-B1, and Vega-C1 confirmed that they attended seminars to manage adult learners and to manage behavioral issues. Rigel-A2 and Rigel-D1 mentioned that they did not receive any training to manage adult learners. Although only some teachers and administrators received training to relate better with adult learners, the limited training so far may be regarded as recognition and acknowledgment that, at a minimum, some CAP students were adult learners. The administrative body of CAP should escalate the process of preparing both teachers and administrators to relate to CAP students as adult learners.

Teachers' training. Current teachers entered the teaching profession after receiving formal training at one of the five leading universities or one of the ten principal teachers' colleges on the island of Jamaica. The training from the teachers' colleges that teachers received prepared them to teach at the early childhood, primary, or secondary level within the national school system. Typically, all teacher preparation training provided in Jamaica modeled the British system, which prepared teachers to teach children of the masters in the early 1900s, and the focus was on pedagogical practice.

This focus was quite acceptable, given the targeted groups that they were preparing to teach.

However, problems arose in CAP courses when teachers ventured to teach other groups such as adults after receiving training to teach younger learners. Perhaps the more substantive problem was the insufficient recognition by the leadership of the island's universities, teachers' colleges, and of the MoEYI that the learning needs of adults differed from the learning needs of children. Teachers might be better prepared to teach adult learners if they received additional and specific pedagogical methods and theories focused on adult learners.

The University of the West Indies (UWI) was perhaps the best-placed institution on the island to remedy the problem of preparing teacher training institutions. This institution offered a master's degree in adult and continuing education, which might have included some aspects of adult learning in the curriculum. This university was rated as the top-ranking tertiary institution in the English-speaking Caribbean and ranked 501 out of 600 in the World University Ranking (World University Ranking, 2019). The UWI offered a Master of Arts in Teacher Education and Teacher Development program. Educators designed this program to improve the quality of teacher education and teacher development in the region through the preparation of educators to acquire the requisite pedagogical training, hands-on methods, and academic knowledge to become effective teacher educators and leaders. From the comments of the participants I interviewed, it can be inferred that the professional training teachers receive to teach in Jamaica has little or no emphasis on andragogy. By offering courses in adult learning at existing institutions,

teachers might have better access to methods and strategies that would aid their delivery of lessons to adult learners.

Some teachers with whom I spoke shared with me that another highly rated university in Jamaica had administrators who recognized the gap that existed between preparing teachers to teach children and preparing teachers to teach adults (teachers, personal communication, August 20, 2019). They developed a Master of Science degree in Career and Technical Education to fill that gap. Then a different university college in Jamaica followed suit and offered a Master of Arts Degree in Teaching with different areas of specializations, which included adult education. Those programs may be suitable for CAP teachers because the focus of each of those programs is about skills training and adult learning.

Within the scope of this study, I did not investigate the number of CAP teachers who accessed these programs. Regardless of the preparation teachers may have received by attending at least one of 13 teachers' colleges or universities in Jamaica, effective teachers often pursue continuous professional development opportunities to acquire new knowledge and develop new techniques to improve their ability to teach, and thus their students' chances to learn. Based on the analysis of the survey and the primary data I received, administrators of some CAP schools facilitated professional development sessions for teachers. Still, there was no indication that they focused on andragogical methodologies and theories in any of those professional development sessions.

With the data compiled in Table 5, I summarize and present a profile of teachers who taught for CAP. Apart from giving a background of teachers' qualifications, years of

experience, the period of employment, and even their areas of specializations, in a part of the table, I focused on the kind of in-service training that CAP teachers received.

Table 5

Career Advancement Program Teacher Qualification, Training and, Experience

	Experience Teaching Adults	Employ-ment Period	Subject/Skill Area currently Teaching	CAP In-Service Training	Other Training Received
Diploma in education	7 years	2012 – present	English	English City and Guilds Workshop (December 2918)	
Diploma in Engineering	8 years 2 years prior CAP	2013 – present	Mathematics	Mathematics City & Guilds workshop/seminars	
Bachelor's in administration	8 years	2011 – present	Business Administration		
International Welding Certificate	2 years	2 years	Welding Level 1	None	None
Bachelor's in Human Ecology	5 months	5 months	Commercial Food Preparation Level 2	None	Level 2 Commis Chef
Bachelor's in Technical Vocational Education & Training (TVET)	1 year		Electrical Installation Level 2	None	None
Bachelor's in education	5 months	5 months	City & Guilds English Skills	None	City & Guilds Workshop
Masters in TVET & Workforce			Customer Service Engagement		Assessor Training
BSc Information Technology			Mathematics		Assessor Training
Diploma in Mathematics					
Diploma in Home Economics Decorating		Commercial Food Preparation	Cake Decorating	Cake	

(table continues)

	Experience Teaching Adults	Employment Period	Subject/Skill Area currently Teaching	CAP In-Service Training	Other Training Received
B.Ed. in General Training Technology		3 years	Furniture Making	Assessor	
B.Ed. in Mathematics	3 years	3 years	Mathematics		
B.Ed. Language Education (Literature Studies)	3 years	3 years	English Language		
B.sc Career Development	3 years	3 years	Career Development		
B.Ed. in	1 year	1 year	Mathematics		

I compiled this table from data shared with me by administrators of schools A, B, C, and D (administrators, personal communications, December 12, 2018, January 15, 2019, February 8, 2019, February 22, 2019). I found out from the data that teachers were adequately qualified to teach at the secondary level by attaining certifications that ranged from the diploma to the bachelor's degree levels. Only three teachers had more than 5 years of experience in the teaching of adults. A senior officer of CAP shared with me a comprehensive report of the in-service training that teachers of CAP schools received (officer, personal communication, September 15, 2019). The training appeared skewed towards building knowledge or skills and personal development. An example of knowledge building was cake decorating, while assessor training was for personal growth. Vega-D1 revealed that these workshops lacked the adult education focus:

> Now and again, there were workshops for the teachers, but I am not sure if they help teachers to manage adult learners better. They were more content based than anything else. We have teachers who received some level of adult education in the master's degree program, which they were pursuing. Still, CAP has not provided us with any targeted courses geared towards adult learning.

The comment by Vega-D1 illustrated that very little was being done for preparing teachers to teach adults. Instead, training was more focused on content.

There was no evidence found in the data of formal training received by any of the teachers in the areas of teaching and managing adult learners. Participants from one school admitted that the principal held sensitization sessions in their staff meeting to expose them to adult education. Two teachers were pursuing master's degrees that exposed them to adult education. Most of the teachers, though, had not received any in-service training nor any type of other informal training. Vega- A1 explained that her school recently transitioned from being a secondary school to a tertiary institution, and that most of the teachers from the secondary school were now teaching in the tertiary environment. She further affirmed that individuals from the MoEYI, along with herself, convened workshops to help teachers adjust to teaching and managing more mature students. She said that teachers needed to improve their skills related to teaching males because 60% of her students were males.

Teachers' teaching styles. Teaching styles that were adopted by teachers may be understood as being teaching methods that include any of the distinctive features, attitudes, attributes or natural proclivities that teachers display in transmitting knowledge to their students (Galbraith, 2004, p. 6). Teachers often adopt teaching styles that they

have been successful with in the past, or they use methods based on how they were taught (James & Maher, 2004). Whatever the justification or motivation for adopting a teaching style, it is a preemptive decision because the styles that they select are only likely to be effective if the teaching styles match the learning styles of their students. The author of multiple intelligence theory posited eight ways in which people perceive and understand the world. The possible ways include (a) logical-mathematical, (b) visual-spatial, (c) bodily-kinesthetic, (d) musical- rhythmic, (e) verbal-linguistic, (f) naturalistic, (g) interpersonal, and (h) intrapersonal (Gardner, 2006). Gardner called these characteristics intelligences. Teachers should adopt a range of teaching styles to match the multiple intelligences of their students.

All five current students and three of the four dropouts who participated commented briefly on their teachers' teaching styles. Canopus-B1 remarked, “The teachers prepared their lessons, but as I said before, if we had a study guide, we would have done better.” This statement suggests that the teachers' preparation had not met his expectations. This student was a “visual” learner. He liked to “see and do” for his learning experience to be useful. Canopus-B2 expressed a different interest by his comment, “At some points, there were fun moments, and those fun moments grabbed everyone's attention.” This comment could have been very instructive to teachers to note that if they had not built fun into their lessons, they might have lost the interest of their class.

Canopus-C1 expressed satisfaction with the diligence and personal attention his teachers provided when he shared, “Very good. If we were absent from classes, they sent us the notes.” Canopus-D1 expressed appreciation for her teachers' use of the local

language and the personal care that her teacher displayed. This display of compassion went beyond the physical classroom space, “Sometimes they used the Patois for some students to understand. They tried to summarize the lessons and sent them to us in e-mails.” Canopus-A1 did not appear to be a fast learner and therefore was pleased with the slow pace of the lessons when he expressed, “Good because they break it down, and they do not teach fast.” In similar remarks, Sirius-A1 offered a similar observation:

> It was okay, and it reminded me of high school and how some of my teachers taught me. If you don't understand something, she would go over it again. She made time for us, even if she had to stay back after school, she would.

Sirius-C2 appreciated the engaging questions from his teachers because issues assisted his learning. He also praised his teachers' high level of punctuality and the excellent relationship which he shared with his teachers. Sirius-C1 differed from all others in the way he liked to learn when he revealed, “As I said, I like to learn on my own, so when I am in class, I just keep quiet in the back.” This comment was noteworthy because some teachers could misinterpret his behavior in class when it was just his standard response to the traditional classroom setting.

In the new paradigm, technology has transformed education, which enabled students to access their notes, assignments, and assessments online in various formats including video and audio at any time. Teachers can use computers, smart boards, and other electronic devices to make lessons much more exciting and engaging for students, as well as to cater to multiple learning styles. Today's generation of students can actively engage with real-world and simulated activities right at their fingertips, and they can use the internet to collaborate in online groups, virtual communities, as well as connect in

real-time with others around the world. Technology has also provided a tool that assists teachers in creating an assessment for the learners with instant results and feedback. Technology, therefore, has already begun to revolutionize not only teaching styles but education overall. Practicing teachers may need to adopt new skills to maneuver new and emerging technology to a central aspect of their classroom, and new teachers should receive technology training before they enter the classroom.

Teachers' knowledge. The focus of CAP is to provide career and technical education in over 20 vocational areas. The teachers who facilitate the career education classes are primarily drawn from the secondary-school system, where they teach students at the secondary level. Technical vocational education teachers are individuals that have completed at least a bachelor's degree but have had limited practical experience in their respective fields. Based on their training, those teachers were usually influential on content but somewhat deficient on the practical side. To fill those gaps, those teachers were sometimes attached to organizations in their fields so as to gain practical work experience. In some instances where there were knowledge gaps, CAP administrators organized workshops for some teachers to help minimize those gaps.

The current students and dropouts in this study were generally pleased with their teacher's knowledge, which they openly expressed. Four of the five current students described their teachers as fully knowledgeable, very knowledgeable, and excellent. One of the dropouts, Sirius-A1, echoed by Sirius-C1 and Sirius-C2, described her teachers, “They were good because most of the teachers were high school teachers. They were knowledgeable in their subject area.” This positive assessment reflected the high level of

trust and confidence students placed in their teachers. While praising her teachers, Sirius-A1 made some candid remarks:

> My teacher had to go to workshops because she was an Information Technology teacher, so she had to go to workshops to gain knowledge to teach that subject. Whatever the teacher didn't know, we would go and research it on the internet.

This comment suggests that the teacher had a knowledge or skill gap that the student could recognize. The student appeared sympathetic to the teacher and gave his teacher high ratings. The training was available to the teacher to close the gaps. I share a summary of my findings in Table 6.

Table 6

Summary of Findings

Research questions	Findings	Major themes
RQ1: Why do students drop out of the Career Advancement Program before completion?	(a) Inadequate financing (b) Crime and violence (c) Negative influence from friends and other youths at risk (d) To pursue other interests (e) Limited value placed on the study program (f) Early parental responsibilities (g) Disciplinary reasons	Factors for dropouts
RQ2: To what extent did the experiences in the Career Advancement Program satisfy the students' needs?	(a) Teachers used their own resources and the resources of the schools to provide significant support to students.	Factors supporting CAP students

(table continues)

Research questions	Findings	Major themes
	(b) Teachers assisted students to attend school regularly and punctually. (c) Teachers saw students' learning needs as paramount. (d) Resources to satisfy students' learning needs were adequate. (e) Students' needs far exceeded their learning needs which may not have been considered (f) Support from the Community was the least available of all the support groups. (g) Parents generally did not support their children beyond secondary school. (h) Parents expected their children to take up jobs and started contributing to the household after leaving secondary school. (i) Students orientation was generally done and prepared students for the program.	
RQ3: How experienced and prepared were teachers in the CAP to teach adult learners?	(a) CAP teachers had the academic credentials to teach at that level. (b) CAP teachers did not regard their students as adult learners (c) Most CAP teachers did not receive training in adult education.	Factors for teacher training and preparation

(table continues)

Research questions	Findings	Major themes
	(a) CAP teachers admitted that they needed training in adult education. (b) In-service training for teachers were content related or for personal development. (c) Teachers were generally punctual and prepared for classes although their teaching styles did not always match the students' learning patterns.	

Conclusion

In exploring the reasons Jamaicans drop out of the CAP, a total of 19 individuals comprising five current students, four dropouts, six teachers, and four administrators participated in this study. While other groups may be able to relate to the focus of this study, the outcomes were mainly relevant to the population I studied. My research followed three guiding questions: (a) Why do students drop out of the CAP before completion? (b) To what extent did the experiences in the CAP satisfy the students' needs? and (c) How experienced and prepared were teachers in the CAP to teach adult learners?

In answering the first research question all four groups agreed that the two main reasons for why students dropped out of CAP were inadequate financing, and crime and violence. The group also felt that students dropped out because of (a) negative influences from friends and other youths at risk, (b) pursuing other interests, (c) the limited value placed on the study program, (d) parental responsibilities, and/or (e) disciplinary reasons.

I decided to group the commonalities that run through all these reasons under one major theme that I decided to call ‘factors for dropouts.’

The participants in responding to the second research question agreed that teachers used their resources and the resources of the schools to provide significant support to students. The participants also agreed that teachers assisted students in attending school regularly and punctually. Not only that, but teachers helped these students see their needs as paramount. The respondents expressed that the available resources to satisfy students’ learning needs were adequate, but the fact that students’ needs far surpassed the realm of learning and education influenced some program coordinators to institute welfare programs to help address the gap. Furthermore, students received little support from their communities or their parents. Some parents did not support their children beyond secondary school, and some even expected their children to take up jobs instead of pursuing schooling. Students received an orientation that prepared them for the program. I grouped all these findings under one major theme that I called ‘factors supporting CAP students.’

Related to the final research question, I explored how experienced and prepared the teachers in CAP were with teaching adult learners. I found that CAP teachers had the academic credentials to teach at that level, but that they did not regard their students as adult learners. Most CAP teachers did not receive training in adult education. The teachers admitted that they needed training in adult education and that in-service training for teachers was content-related or for personal development, rather than focused on educating adults. Teachers were generally punctual and prepared for classes, but their teaching styles did not always match their students’ learning patterns. I grouped all these

findings under one dominant theme that I called ‘factors for teacher training and preparation.’ These findings aided my understanding of why students dropped out of CAP before completing their programs. I believe the most critical thing that I learned was that most teachers had not been trained to teach adults, even though they were teaching adults every day.

Also, through this study, I was able to demonstrate the interconnected nature of dropouts with their communities, families, other students, and the state of things on the island itself. Before students dropped out of school, they would exhibit warning signs. If program administrators had attended to some of those signs, they may have been able to prevent some students from dropping out of school. On one hand, some students who dropped out may have served as a relief to their teachers and administrators by reducing the amount of extreme behaviors they must deal with. Extreme behaviors by students are usually disruptive to the teaching and learning process so teachers would be happy for the relief that would result from the producers of the disruptive behaviors not being present. On the other hand, a student dropping out of school was only the beginning of bigger and more complex societal problems. Students who dropped out of school filled their time with alternative activities I have described earlier in this section. If administrators can implement strategies that keep more students in CAP until graduation, making sure that those students receive better preparation for employment than they would otherwise have, that could be a possible outcome for positive social change.

Another positive result of this research is that school administrators now have new data that give them more information on how to identify early warning signs of students who are the most susceptible to dropping out. Once they find those early

warning signs in a student's life, they can take steps to discourage said students from prematurely exiting the program. Furthermore, I suggested ways of structuring CAP to capture the interests and abilities of students who dropped out or students who were at risk of dropping out. I also developed a professional development workshop to expose teachers to adult learning theory as my project for promoting social change which I outline in detail in Section 3.

Section 3: The Project

Introduction

This section comprises the project portion of this study in the form of a professional development workshop for the teachers of CAP when I specifically address the major gap in practice that formed an important part of my findings in Section 2. Most CAP teachers have not received any training to teach adult learners. Framers of the usual college-teacher-training curriculum in the West Indies concentrate on preparing teachers to teach at the secondary level. In the workshop for this project study, I focused on preparing teachers to teach adult learners.

Project Options

Based on the findings from my research, I could have focused on several other projects and still be able to make a positive impact on social change. One of the projects I considered would have been centered on assisting parents with improving their parenting skills, on ways they could help their children to acquire new skills to become employable, or even on ways family members could improve their financial management skills. I did not choose to work with the parents because I was aware that the Government of Jamaica, through an act of Parliament, implemented The National Parenting Support Commission to provide parenting support aimed at facilitating positive relationships between home and school. This commission came into existence in 2012 and is active across the island. Each year the commission celebrates National Parent Month. A senior officer of MoEYI, shared with me the National Parent Month report for 2019. The coordinators revealed that their areas of emphasis for parents this year was to show love, show empathy, and show respect. They organized several workshops for parents (officer, personal communication,

December 17, 2019). With this level of focus on parenting, I did not feel that I needed to duplicate the efforts of the National Parenting Support Commission.

I could have also elected to implement a program for youths at risk, but I chose not to because the government has already been taking steps to address this problem. The Minister of State under the Ministry of National Security in a think tank presentation, outlined a program to build good character, to maintain a positive attitude, and to provide support to young people in correctional services to become industrious upstanding citizens (minister, personal communication, March 16, 2017),.

Other organizations have set into motion several other initiatives to empower young people in the country, including several skills training programs, youth parliament, skills competition, uniform groups, and even police youth club chapters. The CAP program was an initiative of the government to empower youths at risk as well, so I opted not to do a project for at-risk youth because of the number of efforts that others were making for this group.

Implementing Improved Teacher Competence in Teaching Adults

The Jamaican government intended to use CAP to engage unattached and at-risk youths to build skill capacity among these groups, to improve their quality of life, and to divert some of them from a life of crime. A lot, therefore, is hinged on the success of CAP, and thus, the success the CAP teachers have in teaching the CAP students. Scholars have recognized a strong connection between teacher competence and the performance of their students (DiPaola & Hoy, 2014; King & Newmann, 2000; Vetter, 2012). Based on the importance that the CAP represents to Jamaica; I recommended a 3-day professional development workshop for CAP teachers in order to help them and CAP administrators

hone the skills needed to teach adult learners. They will receive introductory lessons in a few adult learning theories as well as in teaching styles and methods suitable for adults. There are two main outcomes that I hope can be derived from this workshop, namely (a) to bring about greater levels of awareness of adult learning theories among the CAP teachers, and (b) to apply adult learning strategies in the planning of their lessons.

I anticipate that through this workshop project, I will expand the competency of attending teachers in areas such as knowledge of the subject matter, pedagogy skill, resourcefulness, behavior motivation, and evaluation (Ivowi, 1987). I expect that after participating in these workshops, teachers will develop new strategies to make their lessons more interesting and engaging to their students, and then in time, that student performance will improve.

Successive governments have initiated programs to train unattached youths or youths at risk, and CAP is only one such program (director, personal communication, August 21, 2017). Many teachers who had taught in the secondary school system were then incorporated as teachers for CAP. The data indicated that many CAP teachers were not trained to teach adults, and neither were they trained to administer programs for adult learners or their teachers. The natural consequence of this was that teachers used the same teacher-centered strategies they used during their regular classes at the secondary level instead of changing their approach to be more student-centered so their lessons would be more effective at teaching adult students. Generally, the CAP classes were held in the afternoons after the regular school day ended. However, this schedule is changing because 90% of schools with CAP classes began offering the CAP programs during the

day as of September 2019, with only the remaining 10% continuing to have evening programs.

Some of the CAP classes were being held in the classrooms where secondary school students would study. As a result, CAP students in the classroom have been treated the same way that secondary students or elementary children have been treated, including being subject to the same forms of discipline. Therefore, in this workshop project, teachers and program administrators will be informed of the fact that many of their students, while being young adults, were being treated like children, which led to some students dropping out. In the workshop I will go on to train these teachers and administrators how to work with adult learners to avoid this inappropriate situation from permeate further into the CAP program courses.

Many teachers and administrators in Jamaica need to be trained in andragogy as a distinct form of pedagogy. Because of those traditional educational practices on the island, school did not appear very exciting or even comprehensible for some CAP students. Some teachers were not able to hold their students' attention, making the classes not worth their time, which led these students to drop out. By attending and participating in these workshops, CAP teachers will become more knowledgeable in the basics of adult learning theories. They will learn to implement these basics in their workshop lesson plans and practice lessons, making it possible for them to go back to their classrooms and practice these better methods and techniques when teaching their adult students. Then, with practice and encouragement, these teachers will keep their students interested and engaged in classes enough for them to attend every day, making learning deep and

meaningful, thus reducing the number of students who drop out because of a lack of classroom engagement.

Professional Development/Training Curriculum and Materials

Project Description and Goals

After analyzing the data, I discovered several gaps in teaching practices that I thought were significant enough to affect the quality of delivery and the outcomes of the education being offered to CAP students. My findings were categorized under three major themes, namely (a) factors for dropouts, (b) factors for supporting CAP students, and (c) factors for teacher training and preparation. Although they were interconnected, the findings under all three factors were different enough from each other to warrant being treated differently.

I will call the workshop I designed the Adult Education Sensitization Workshop (AESW). For ease of reference in the rest of this document, I will refer to these workshops as AESW.

In preparation for the AESW, I conducted an in-depth literature review on adult education theories and teaching styles suitable for adults. The summaries of my reviews are outlined in a subsequent section labeled “Review of Literature.” I will share the relevant content from this review with teachers and administrators who participate in AESW. The content from AESW that is focused on training them how to teach adults will also guide the teaching style I will use to present the materials in the workshops, and that way the participants will get the theory and a practical example.

In these workshops, I will set out to model possible approaches that teachers could incorporate into their own lessons to make them interesting and engaging to the

students. Participants will have multiple opportunities to interact with each other through discussions, completing assigned tasks, affirming each other, and making suggestions for improvement. I will present course materials with a focus on various adult learning theories and the competency-based approach to teaching and learning, and by sending daily training goals electronically to each participant 3 weeks prior to the beginning of the workshop. By making the materials available to participants before the workshop, I expect that they will have ample time to become familiar with the content, which will allow for more time during the workshop for meaningful interactions and activities to occur. This pedagogical approach uses the blended learning (Graham & Robinson, 2007) or flipped classroom concept where the traditional classroom work becomes homework to be done before attending class and what traditionally was homework, becomes classroom work, thereby optimizing learning and teaching activities (Flipped Learning Network, 2014). The concept of flipped learning can be simple but can also be complex. Creating a flipped classroom experience is complex when educators consider how the dynamics of each classroom vary. For example, when teachers consider aspects such as the subject they teach, the stages of development or motivation level of the students, and the available resources, a flipped classroom might not be possible (Garrison & Kanuka, 2004).

The effectiveness of the flipped classroom has evolved with the emergence of new technology. Over two decades ago, the technology component of the flipped classroom brought rich information to students but did not enable students to receive immediate feedback until they returned to the physical classroom (Cakir & Bichelmeyer, 2016). Most students have access to WhatsApp on their mobile phones, which is an

inexpensive way of keeping in constant contact with their peers and associates. I will create a WhatsApp group for all participants to facilitate a forum-like area where participants can interact with each other and with me outside of the scheduled workshop times. I will provide instructions and other resource materials required to complete assigned tasks during the workshops.

The primary aim of AESW is to build awareness among participants (a) that their students are adult learners, (b) that adults learn and are motivated to learn differently than children, (c) that a teacher's approach to teaching adults must be different from that of teaching children, and (d) that there are an array of adult learning theories that can be adopted to actual classroom practices. The goal is to increase their ability to teach adults by giving them a repertoire of strategies to use in the classroom. I also hope that policy makers will recognize that by inadequately preparing teachers to teach adult learners, they create serious gaps in the teaching and learning experience of the adult cohort. I hope that in bringing attention to these gaps, educational leaders will do more work to remedy the gaps that create serious issues for adult education in the country. Applying this action in schools nationwide would represent one of the most significant social changes in the Jamaican adult education landscape as well as in the Caribbean.

Rationale for Choosing Project Genre

The problem of school dropouts is a perennial one. Assessment of the national dropout rates in many countries suggests that even with the most optimistic approach, there continue to be too many students who were leaving school early (Tyler & Lofstrom, 2009). This high dropout rate has escalated to become a global challenge, hence the

reason I embarked on this study of understanding the causes behind why Jamaicans drop out from the CAP.

After collecting and analyzing the data, I found that many teachers who teach adults did not receive training in adult learning theory and techniques during their teacher training experience. The teachers felt that if they received exposure to the area of adult education, they would be able to improve their ability to teach adult learners. In order to provide that exposure to adult education theories, we may consider pursuing professional development programs as a viable option. These programs may be formal and may include attending workshops, professional meetings, and mentoring exercises. Professional development may also be informal such as reading professional publications and watching documentaries related to academic discipline. (Harris, 2002; Semela, 2007). I propose to formally engage teachers in a 3-day workshop at one of the CAP centers in the central part of the island where I will introduce teachers to some adult learning theories that may have been unfamiliar to them. I will facilitate discussions to aid participants' understanding of the methods and engage participants in developing teaching strategies appropriate to selected adult learning theories.

While there is little doubt that professional development workshops are valuable, it is the programs that consider the school's context that are the most successful (Boatright, Miels, & Hendricks, 2014; Montgomery, 2014; Myers, 2014). Therefore, I will engage participants in defining the context of their respective schools in order to derive meaning and relevance to each participant.

Review of Literature

Search Strategies

I used several search terms and databases to locate articles for this aspect of the research. I conducted an extensive search using keywords and phrases such as *professional development, flipped classroom, adult learning theories, andragogy vs pedagogy, self-directed learning,* and *teacher competence.*

I used several online academic libraries to facilitate the process. One of the search tools I used was the alert feature of Google Scholar. I used the Walden University Library extensively to identify various educational sources such as academic journals on EBSCO Host, ERIC Research Complete, and SAGE all of which contained materials on the areas I was interested in. I also consulted textbooks on adult learning theories. I continued the search process until I reached saturation levels. As I continued to search for information and sources, I knew I had reached saturation when I found the same content in articles or themes that researchers referenced in the sources related to my project.

Using the various search terms mentioned above, I identified several articles focused on my research topic. From there, each article referenced several other materials, which I then also investigated. As the research unfolded, I consulted several sources that I used as references in this document. The major challenge I experienced while researching was that despite consulting several articles that had come out during the last 5 years, they substantially referenced sources dated beyond 5 years. Notwithstanding the dates on some of the resources, I still referenced some that I believed to be relevant to my project. As I did in an earlier section, I selected Recite Beta as the solution to managing my references because it is reasonably accurate, is easy to use, checks the accuracy of

citations, matches in-text citations with my references list, and alerts me to existing errors.

Theoretical and Conceptual Frameworks

Both the theory of andragogy and the self-directed concept of learning are frameworks on which I formed the basis of my professional development project. Andragogy is the art and science of helping adults learn. In contrast, pedagogy is the art and science of assisting children to learn (Knowles, 1980). The concept of self-directed learning starts by utilizing an individual's resourcefulness in identifying the gaps in their knowledge or skills. Once those gaps are self-identified, these individuals can (a) set goals to narrow those gaps, (b) determine what resources they will need to achieve those goals, (c) select and execute suitable learning strategies, and (d) assess the outcomes of their learning efforts (Knowles, 1975, p. 18). One of the main goals of self-directed learning is to foster transformation, which is germane to transformational learning theory. Some of the most notable contributors to the development of transformational learning were Jack Mezirow, Laurent Daloz, and Robert Boyd (Merriam, Caffarella, & Baumgartner, 2007)

The author of andragogy focused on how the concept and technology of adult learning and the methods and techniques of adult education related to a certain set of assumptions about adult learners (Davenport & Davenport, 1985). Knowles outlined six main assumptions about adult learners that andragogy uses as a framework. First, adults have an independent self-concept and can direct their learning. Second, adults accumulate a portfolio of life experiences that facilitators can use as a valuable resource for education. Third, learning opportunities should be congruent with the learning needs and

changing social roles of adults. Fourth, adults need to apply knowledge to solve immediate problems (Knowles, 1980). Fifth, adults are motivated to learn by internal rather than external influences. Lastly, sixth, adult learners need to know why they should learn something (Knowles, 1984).

These assumptions incorporate the independence and self-directed nature of adult learners. All aspects of program planning and delivery for adults should be conducive to adult audiences, i.e. should be based on the aforementioned six assumptions. Knowles recommended that the physical and psychological climate of the classroom should be designed to suit adults, regardless of the different roles each adult student might have outside the classroom. Within a school for adults, both teachers and students must demonstrate a mutual feeling of acceptance, respect, and support. In other words, in the adult classroom, both students and teachers must operate as partners in the learning process. This need for a partnership is not only necessary because it reduces potential disciplinary issues, but because learning itself is multi-dimensional and the partnership of students and teachers is most effective at navigating the process of learning (Knowles, 1980).

In Jamaica, confrontations often develop between a student and a teacher when the student feels like the teacher is treating them like a child. In an article published online by *The Gleaner* on February 23, 2010 (Hall, 2010), allegations were made that a student and a teacher had gotten into a physical altercation when the teacher attempted to confiscate a knife that the student had brought to school. The student attempted to wrestle with the teacher to recover the weapon. The teacher desired to enforce discipline.

However, the student wanted to preserve his status as an adult, and so rebelled against the teacher's method of discipline.

A more recent article was published online in the local newspaper, *Observer,* on November 11, 2018 (Hendricks, 2018), highlighted the plight of a teacher who was dismissed by the school board after he was found guilty of hitting a student with a microphone cord, resulting in bruises across the child's face and hand. This method of discipline did not fit the adult context and the lines of authority seemed to blur between student and teacher. Incidences such as these have caused students to drop out of school, which was a minor finding of my study.

The ethos of mutual respect and regard is not always present in adult classrooms in Jamaica. Often the teachers assume the role of an adult and treat adult students like children. For example, a teacher may not feel obliged to answer a student's question, or a teacher becomes dismissive because he or she may think that a student's opinion is not essential. Responses of this nature by teachers may serve to create a distance in the relationship between students and teachers.

While these two scenarios may seem to be rhetorical examples, both are samples of actual behaviors that have taken place. The teacher's aim should always be to facilitate the learning of his or her students, assisting them as they gain a better knowledge of themselves. If a teacher can do that, an adult learner's education in the classroom can become a critical driver in helping students to transform into self-directed learners (Mezirow, 1985). Furthermore, the primary role of an adult educators should have is to build capacity among adults and encourage them to take advantage of available learning

opportunities (Mezirow, 1981). This role does not always seem evident in the ways some teachers relate to or teach their students.

Ways to Develop Self-Directed Learners

Many educators hold the view that adult students are self-directed learners. Based on that assumption, these educators often assign work to their students with the expectation that the students will produce high quality work while at the same time providing little or no supervision. While some students meet their teachers' expectations of them, many students fail to reach an acceptable quality of work, i.e. they fail. Those who fail to meet their teachers' expectations, rather than being bad students, may instead be manifesting behaviors of students who are not self-directed learners.

The concept of self-directed learning is a complex issue because self-directed learning is personal and situational. The student who is self-directed in one area, may be a dependent learner in another area. Teachers must therefore assess their students' learning readiness and then structure the learning experience, so students are supported and encouraged into becoming self-directed. For example, a teacher may assign in-class work to her students, providing close guidance and supervision as the students work to complete their task. She would then exercise patience and allow students to make mistakes without being punitive in her reactions to their efforts. At another time, she may assign students part of the work in class while leaving the other portion for them to complete on their own outside of class, that way her students get time working with her and time working without her. Naturally, she may also assign work for the students to complete on their own without any supervision (Ark, 2016; Petro, 2017). Whatever

approach she takes, it should be designed with the student in mind especially considering how self-directed her students can be.

Teachers who used this approach, namely understanding where their students are now and working to help them grow into what they could become, may be able to transform their students into self-directed learners, and in the process dispel the notion that all adults are self-directed learners. Participants in the AEWS will have ample opportunity to examine and discuss more ways that they can help their students become self-directed learners.

McClusky, Illeris, and Jarvis (2007), postulated in their load, power, and margin theory that everyone must contend with the load and power in their lives. Load represents individuals' goals, demands, desires, wishes, and wants, while power represents the resources individuals have at their disposal to fulfill or satisfy their load. The extent to which individuals' power exceeds their load will determine their margin of comfort. I hope to introduce teachers to this theory to raise awareness of the load and power in their lives and discuss strategies to reduce their load and increase their power. I also hope to sensitize teachers to the fact that students come to the learning experience with their own loads. After teachers become sensitive to the loads of their students, teachers will be better able to help their students reduce their load by helping them increase their power. Ultimately, this will lead to more students completing their program as the power of these students starts to outweigh their loads.

Professional Development

Educational administrators and their teachers have the responsibility of ensuring that students' performances are in line with the standards required of them. To achieve

this goal, the educational administrators and their teachers must continually rethink and reshape their instructional practices (Long, 2014). Changing instructional practices is not an easy task (Kragler, Martin, & Sylvester, 2014). It takes time for teachers to reflect on the outcome of their practices throughout teacher professional development programs.

Features of effective professional development. Many progressive countries have professional development programs that include similar features, such as (a) wide-ranging opportunities for both formal and informal in-service development, (b) programmed professional learning and partnership built into teachers' work schedules, (c) professional development activities that are entrenched in teachers' routines, (d) school leaders who involve teachers in making decisions regarding curriculum and instructional practices, (e) orientation programs with experienced teachers who mentor younger ones, and (f) formal training for mentors (Wei, Darling-Hammond, Andree, Richardson, & Orphanos, 2009, p. 18)

Active professional development involves teachers as assuming the roles of both learners and teachers in such a way that they are allowed to struggle with the uncertainties that accompany each role. To do this, development programs must engage teachers in concrete tasks of teaching, assessment, observation, and reflection that illuminates the processes of learning and development. It should engender inquiry, meditation, and experimentation that is participant focused. Active professional development should also be collaborative, involving a sharing of knowledge among educators and a focus on communities rather than individuals. Also, the sustainability of an active development program should be connected to and be derived from teachers'

experiences in the classroom working with their students, linking practical experience with development concepts and any changes that may be taking place in the school.

The professional development of teachers is dynamic and has multiple aspects of applicability. Some of the programs may include action research, lesson studies, observational visits to other schools, and individual or collaborative research. Teacher development programs may also entail the establishment of a professional network, mentoring or peer observation and coaching, reading from professional literature, informal dialogues about how to improve teaching, and collaborative curriculum development (Alberta Teachers' Association, 2016; OECD, 2013). Studies on the outcomes of structured action research with in-service teachers have demonstrated positive results, such as increased teaching efficacy (Cabaroglu, 2014). Whatever method of professional development is utilized in a program, teachers should be the focus. (Hargreaves, 2014; Lieberman & Miller, 2014).

In the milieu of professional development offerings for teachers, context is one differentiating factor. A majority of education professionals might agree that teachers are obliged to take responsibility for their own professional development. However, the school environment and the administration that is responsible for that environment have a significant impact on the development teachers experience, especially on the degree to which teachers can improve and develop over time (DiPaola & Hoy, 2014). An effective school environment is one that is orderly, focused, professional, and safe. The school climate should not be oppressive but should be welcoming and conducive to teaching and learning. There should also be respect given and received by all parties in the school

community, as well as mutual understanding and acceptance of the rules that govern the operations of the school (MoEYI, 2017b).

School leaders find it desirable to organize professional development programs in response to identified present and future needs, missions, or goals of the school in order to meet the learning needs of the students in their specific context (Gore et al., (2017); Morewood, 2014; Simons, McClure, & Hampson, 2014). This inclusive approach may guarantee the relevance of the programs and generate higher levels of interest among the various stakeholders.

School leaders who have not yet adopted the inclusive approach with teachers as major partners may find it beneficial to do so. School-based professional development programs allow researchers, teachers, and professional development providers to identify factors that have a more significant influence on students' learning and their behavior (O'Brennan, Bradshaw, & Furlong, 2014). Others have expressed similar sentiments (Boatright et al., 2014; Montgomery, 2014; Myers, 2014). Again, the benefits are likely to be substantial with multiple stakeholders identifying everyday needs from various perspectives and taking ownership of the need to address them.

Benefits from professional development. Professional development is of interest to schools and their students, and vital for teachers' ongoing growth (Fischer et al., 2018; Wei et al., 2009). Increasingly, teachers are finding these programs to be significant to their development and progress as professionals. Professional development programs are equally important for those who are seeking equip students with skills for the 21st century such as critical thinking, problem solving, communication and collaborative skills (Jacobson-Lundeberg, 2016; Patton, Parker, & Tannehill, 2015). Furthermore,

teachers' professional development is a crucial driver of excellence in any school to contribute to not only teacher and school improvement but also the overall growth of the education system (Dagnew & Asrat, 2016). The challenge is to find the right balance because different stakeholders do not necessarily desire the same things from the process.

Impact of professional development. Professional development programs have a far-reaching impact. Ultimately, those teachers who are successful utilize professional development programs to achieve the goal of transforming beliefs and practices in order to improve student learning (Griffith, Plummer, Connery, Conway, & Wade, 2014; Hudak, 2014; Myers, 2014). Social constructivists identified in broad terms three different ways in which adults transform their learning. These transformative learning strategies include (a) adults examining their beliefs and experiences, (b) adults performing critical reflective assessments either individually or with peers, and (c) adults engaging in thoughtful, rational discourse that leads adults to transform their beliefs and behaviors (Mezirow, 1995). Teachers should engage in active professional development consistently (Yoon, Duncan, Lee, Scarloss, & Shapley, 2007), as well as learn to utilize and create good social capital as teachers interact with each other (Keay, May, & O'Mahony, 2014). This dynamic approach adds to the dynamic nature of professional development for teachers.

Educational administrators are required to ensure that teachers have the skills and knowledge needed to adapt to fast-changing social and economic related educational imperatives (De Vries & Prenger, 2018). In one study, 86% of the teachers and 100% of principals agreed that their participation in professional development programs had a positive impact on their daily teaching activities. Respondents agreed that their

professional development program equipped them to actively apply learning methods, undertake continuous assessment, appropriately manage their classrooms, solve student problems, and encouraged students to involve themselves in collegial learning and cooperative work (Tulu, 2019). This list is not exhaustive, but it provides a range of options that school administrators pursue in developing their cadre of teaching professionals. Changes are regularly occurring all over the world, which has far-reaching implications in how teachers educate their students. Professional learning as part of a community of learners is one way to envision ongoing professional learning (Lieberman & Miller, 2014).

Professional development as an Avenue for self-improvement. Many educational practitioners have realized that teaching is a dynamic profession that requires constant improvement (Özdemir, 2019). With the level of dynamism that is required, educational institutions must constantly improve their school systems (Dowling, 2016; Greany, 2014). Self-improvement will emerge from establishing a culture of professional reflection, inquiry, and learning focused on effective teaching and student learning, in and between schools across the country (Gilbert, 2017). As communities become focused on self-reflection, they foster a greater willingness to engage in professional discourse and dialogue with colleagues in order to share knowledge in practical ways. Alongside this, there can be a more general shift towards learning-oriented or inquiry-based cultures in schools that have continued collaboration efforts (Armstrong, 2015). School administrators may do well to encourage this culture of collaboration among staff to build morale and improve efficiency in the school community.

To create these collaborative relationships between schools, institutions have tried to create professional learning networks as a way of improving education in schools and across school systems (Armstrong, 2015). Networks are useful in fostering knowledge sharing, collaboration, as well as practicing development across schools. This sharing can be especially helpful in filling resource gaps that exist in individual institutions because the network provides access to expertise that would otherwise be available in different schools (Huxham & Vangen, 2005; Muijs, 2015). Such resources are sometimes inadequate for fulfilling a school's fundamental mission to ensure that all children realize their potential and receive adequate support so that they can enter society as competent, responsible citizens, irrespective of background and situation (Arkhipenka et al., 2018; Howland, 2015).

Technological Impact

There has been a preponderance of new and emerging technologies in almost every sphere of life. This vast amount of technology has forced education into a fourth industrial revolution. Many products and services have even started to incorporate artificial intelligence. The technocrats of the world have redesigned the functionality of technology, which they call the internet of things, to utilize super rapid processing speeds for data. Education in this context, and in a broader sense, can be considered a collection of institutions that include ministries of education, local educational authorities, teacher training institutions, schools, colleges, and universities whose primary mandate is to provide learning opportunities to children and young people (Brown, 2019). To achieve this mandate, educational leaders have pooled their resources to learn from and support

each other because no one institution would be able to respond to the rapid changes and demands to remain relevant (Diaz-Gibson, Zaragoza, Daly, Mayayo, & Romani, 2017).

Pedagogy Versus Andragogy

In order to explain the concept of andragogy, I find it easier to juxtapose it with the idea of pedagogy. For many years, educators treated these two concepts as complete opposites. Currently, the author of andragogy wants teachers to view andragogy and pedagogy as at opposite ends of a continuum instead of being complete opposites.

Children and adults, based on their level of maturity, tend to learn in different ways. Pedagogical approaches are more likely to be used when teaching children because children generally rely on teachers for instructions and direction during the learning experience. Teachers invariably choose (a) the content that students learn, (b) the methodology in delivering that content, and (c) the methods of assessing students' learning. The approach that teachers use when teaching adults may vary because adult students are either on a path or have attained some ability with self-directed learning. Intellectually mature students have the capacity to assess their own progress and do not need teachers to determine if they are progressing.

Because children have a limited number of experiences to add value to their lessons, teachers become the focal point of the learning experience because children look to teachers to provide the information or experiences needed to learn effectively. However, in a class of adults, teachers are not necessarily the focal point because adult students have many experiences to share that add a level of diverse richness to the learning experience.

In terms of the students' readiness to learn, children receive set learning paths to follow in order to progress from one stage to another. On the other hand, adult students' readiness to learn is triggered by different factors that vary from one person to another, e.g. the prospect of a job promotion, increased remuneration, or a wish to acquire a specific skill to start their own business.

Regardless of a student's preferred learning style, the curriculum used when teaching children is often set and delivered in a structured way that follows a strictly pedagogical approach. The proponents of andragogy reveal that adults' preferred learning style is one in which learning is practical and is relevant to solving problems instead of being focused on content.

The final, major difference between pedagogy and andragogy relates to student motivation. Children are motivated to learn in is different ways compared to how adults are motivated to learn. Children are motivated mostly by external factors, e.g. pressure from family, promise of gifts, or even threats from parents or teachers. Adults are more intrinsically motivated, e.g. better self-image, or self-actualization, or personal goals (Knowles, 1988). These differences in motivation, while seeming obvious, represent a core concept of the AESW because by knowing the motivations of their students, teachers can tailor make their lesson plans to their individual classrooms, and when needed, to individual students.

Flipped or Blended Learning Classroom

The flipped classroom concept is also referred to as flipped learning, flipped class, inverted classroom, or blended learning. Whatever term is being used, the concept of a flipped classroom is when facilitators use technology or other means to extend a class

beyond traditional physical boundaries. In this practice, facilitators make materials available to students ahead of time by way of video lecture, screencast, or podcast (Griffiths & Graham, 2009; Milman, 2015). There are substantial benefits that educators can derive from adopting the flipped approach. One obvious benefit is that this approach provides a unique combination of face-to-face interactions and online teaching, which can be more effective at engaging students in the learning experience (Aspden & Helm, 2004; Graham & Robison, 2007). Another benefit of the flipped classroom is that this approach provides additional chances for students to interact with the class, both face-to-face as well as online, in an asynchronous format with conversations happening in both modalities (Means, Toyama, Murphy, & Baki, 2013). The flipped classroom approach to teaching and learning can make classrooms more dynamic because individual students can engage directly with the body of knowledge shared by other students and then, once in the class, can bolster their own understanding while not feeling limited to the classroom as the singular place of learning. I will use the flipped classroom methodology in the AESW in order to create a more meaningful learning experience for the participants.

Implementation. To help participants prepare for the training activity, I will send pre-training resource materials to them at least 2 weeks in advance and ask them to read and complete specific tasks per the instructions. On day 1 of the 3-day workshop, participants will place themselves in work teams of five people. I will provide each group with in-training resources. I will be the lead trainer and have two other guest presenters there to help conduct the training. In the training kit each participant receives, they will have a copy of the course schedule that is complete with activities for reinforcement that

they can perform after each presentation. Participants will complete a course evaluation at the end of day 3, after which they will receive their certificates of participation. I have shared the training outline with the leadership of one university college. Following further discussions, we hope they will award the certificate and add this seminar to their pool of customized courses. This university college is one of the oldest and most renowned teacher training institutions in Jamaica. The designation university college is a term used in many countries such as the United Kingdom, Canada, and Australia to represent a hybrid between a college and a university. University colleges offer post-secondary education but are not accorded university status. Instead, university colleges are often linked to a larger university.

Potential resources. I will require several resources to stage this workshop successfully. Some of the primary resources I will need include a flipchart easel and paper, permanent markers, masking tape, multi-media projector, projector, and screen. I will also need speakers, laptop computers, pointer, double pockets folders, sticky pads, note pads, pens, highlighters, handouts, course schedules, and a sizeable workspace. I will also require the services of a clerical assistant who will assist with the registration process and monitor the distribution of course materials.

Potential barriers. Despite the relevance of this workshop, there are potential barriers that may affect the staging and outcome of the sessions. One potential obstacle includes the perception that the workshop will ultimately create more work for teachers. They may be resistant to change, to the idea of reworking their lesson plans, or to seeing their teaching style differently, and so some invited participants may be unwilling to attend the sessions. Another obstacle may come from the fact that some participants may

be unable to use the technology needed to participate in a flipped classroom setting. Others may not even own a computer, tablet, or smartphone to access materials electronically. I hope to help some participants to overcome these barriers by encouraging them to speak openly and candidly. I will show empathy with their concerns. In cases that are not confidential, I will solicit input from others from the class who may have overcome similar challenges and who were willing to share their experiences.

Project evaluation. For every workshop, the three critical components necessary for success are inputs, outputs, and outcomes. Learning outcomes are what participants expect to learn throughout the session. The evaluation method I will use for this workshop will use learning outcomes to determine what knowledge, skills, and understanding participants gained throughout the seminar (Klefstad, Baribu, Horgen & Hjeltnes, 2010). Learning outcomes are not always easy to measure immediately after a training has ended. A more reliable evaluation would be to gather the real-life experiences of teachers after they've had time to incorporate the principles of the workshop, but that will have to be left up to future studies. This future gathering effort is outside the timeframe and scope of this study.

I will develop a project evaluation form in Google Forms, which I will forward to each participant's e-mail addresses on the last day of the workshop. I will ask them to complete the form at the end of the workshop. I will place a blank copy of the form in Appendix A. Because I am more interested in the responses, I will not require participants to disclose their identity on the evaluation sheet, and as such, I will keep all evaluation responses confidential.

I will generate a report from the combined responses which I will then use to improve the AESW for future sessions. I will also share the report with the CAP administrators at the CAP Office so the potential effects of the workshop and the next steps CAP might take to improve the program can be discussed.

Implications Including Social Change

I undertook this study so that I could gain an understanding of the causes behind Jamaican dropouts from CAP. CAP started as a way to teach unattached and at-risk youths how to improve their lives, but many of these youths who had registered for the program were leaving their courses of study prematurely. For this reason, I focused on three research questions to guide me in exploring the problem.

1. Why do students drop out of the Career Advancement Program before completion?
2. To what extent did the experiences in the Career Advancement Program satisfy students' needs?
3. How experienced and prepared were teachers of the CAP to teach adult learners

There were several reasons why students dropped out of the CAP, but personal financial constraints were the most commonly reported reason. To solve the financial burden that CAP students face, they may need an appropriate stipend that covers the cost of travel and time. Another solution may be to work with local businesses to garner work assignments in exchange for a modest remuneration. In this way, they will be able to gain valuable work experience to improve their skills. The work and study option may be the preferred option because it has a higher chance of encouraging CAP students to learn the value of working for what they want, rather than being overly dependent on others.

Another implication for social change is the need for parents to receive training to hone their parenting skills. With these improved skills, parents could become motivators for the children to remain in CAP through to completion. Some students who dropped out were previous dropouts, and, in some instances, their parents were dropouts too. One of the first questions I asked when starting this research was whose problem is the dropout problem? Was the problem only with the dropouts and their families, or was the problem a societal one? After considering the findings of my research, the issue seems to be more of a societal one. Understanding this, and trying to change it, may require a shift in perspective from school administrators and teachers to embrace that reality. Once they do, they can plan and prepare for the issues their students may face. After that, their new skills and preparation may become more effective at retaining students in the CAP.

Many CAP students and dropouts did not receive support from their community. They admitted that sometimes, the lack of support from their community contributed to their dropping out. Despite knowing that if they stayed in the program to the end, their prospects for receiving suitable employment would improve, their communities made staying motivated too difficult for some students. Should these students receive steady employment opportunities while studying, seeing the change that employment brings might do more to sustain these students, keep them in their programs, and by so doing, improve their living conditions.

Conclusion

I collected data through interviews with (a) current students, (b) dropouts, (c) teachers, and (d) administrators. They proffered several reasons why students dropped out of CAP, unearthed numerous sources of support for the CAP students, and revealed

gaps in the training teachers in Jamaica receive. My findings exposed weaknesses that need attention in many local areas. I singled out teacher training and preparation as the area that I could focus on for the corrective action in this project. To correct the gaps, I created a professional development workshop (AESW) for teachers who did not receive training in adult education.

During the AESW, I include plenary and practical exercises in areas such as pedagogy and andragogy, self-directed learning, transformational learning, stages of self-directed learning approaches, multiple intelligence theory, and the theory of power, load, and margin. This 3-day workshop is ready for implementation. I culminate this study with reflections and conclusions in Section 4.

Section 4: Reflections and Conclusions

Introduction

In Section 4 of this document, I present a reflective look at the study from the perspective of the researcher. In the first segment, I will reflect on the strengths and limitations of the project. While deficiencies in and of themselves are not complimentary, they are not final because, in my career as an educator, I will continue to explore ways in which I may address the limitations of this project. I will also share my reflections on the journey of seeking answers to the local problem of students dropping out. From my research findings, the answers and the solutions I discovered evolved into a scholarly work that I connected to the social good. Because of the connections I made during my research, I can contribute to the body of knowledge on this topic for improving educational practices and results in the area. I noted one significant gap in practice, that local teachers had not received training on how to teach adult learners, which was a result of the limited exposure local adult educators had had to better training on how to effectively teach their adult students. By highlighting this gap through this research and gaining support from influencers across the education landscape, I hope to fulfill the potential impact of this work in effecting social change within the adult education sector and the potential this research might have for future research.

Project Strengths and Limitations

During the implementation of this project, I hope to develop several significant strengths in those teachers and administrators who participate. The overarching advantage I hope to accentuate is that adults learn in different ways than children, and that teachers of adult learners require specialized training to facilitate proper lesson plans

and classroom environments to teach adult learners. This problem went unrecognized in my country for many years, and by exposing some adult educators during AESW to practices in the area of adult education, I might create a wave of change as more teachers become aware of their lack of knowledge regarding effective teaching methodologies and best practices in adult education courses.

The data I collected that led me to the conclusion that adult educators needed further exposure to the best teaching practices for adult education was thorough and had breadth and depth because of the range of sources from which I garnered the data. The four categories of participants who gave interviews and completed questionnaires included current students, dropouts, teachers, and administrators. I also collected data from source documents. From those documents, I was able to analyze the relationships between the CAP teachers' qualifications, the areas in which those teachers taught, and the areas in which they had received in-service training during their employment in the CAP. All the data from the sources corroborated that CAP teachers needed exposure to adult education theories and practices.

Two of the strengths of AESW were the confidence that teachers and administrators displayed while pledging to participate in the workshop and their candid admission of their need for training in adult learning theory and instruction. The principal of one of the island's most renowned teacher training institutions concurred that teachers were only prepared to teach up to the secondary level, so the fact that teachers and administrators are so willing to accept their lack of skills and work to better themselves gives me hope for the future of Jamaica’s adult education programs.

Another of the significant strengths of this project is that during the workshop, facilitators will emphasize some best practices, and will then allow participants to simulate and practice both the roles of the teacher and student. By taking on the role of student, I hope that participants will develop higher levels of empathy for those they teach. Once they can better relate to the ways their students learn as adults in class, teachers will be able to teach so their students can apply classroom lessons to real life.

During the workshop, several opportunities are provided for participants to reflect on their own experiences, share their experiences with colleagues, and benefit from the exchange of ideas. Some of the activities will entail responding to scenarios as student or as teachers. Those activities include recorded role-plays, reviewing the video of said role-plays, reading poetry, and team teaching. Events such as these make learning a transformational process for the participants. I will dedicate a full session to Mezirow's (1997) transformational theory, which involves critical thinking and soul searching into a person's views and philosophies, with the goal of changing the way the educators see the world. By including soul searching activities and then exchanging experiences, participants may be able to pool their ideas to solve common problems that they may be having in preparing better lessons for teaching their adult students. Included in the execution of the workshop experiences, presenters will model a climate of "adultness" both physically and psychologically. In this climate, facilitators will expect participants to feel accepted, respected, and supported by fellow participants and between participants and the instructors (Knowles, 1980, p. 47).

I grounded the project on the philosophical framework of andragogy, which is the art and science of helping adults to learn. In one segment of the workshop, I will contrast

andragogy with pedagogy, e.g. “the art and science of helping children to learn” (Knowles, 1980, p.43). Facilitators of the workshop will expose participants to the theory of andragogy and other arguments relating to adult education. Participants will share their reactions and experiences concerning each of the assumptions of andragogy. Facilitators will then ask participants to share from their own experiences the extent to which their responses to adult learners confirm or conflict with the assumptions of andragogy. I designed this exercise to be transformational for each participant and, therefore, affect changes in their behaviors when they return to teach in their various schools.

During the AESW, I will also highlight staged, self-directed learning (Grow, 1991, 1994). Participants will have the opportunity of assessing their own experience by garnering an atmosphere of self-directed learning, as well as reflecting on the experiences of some of their students. The attendees will also explore ways in which they might be able to assist their students to become self-directed learners.

Limitations of Project and Mitigating Strategies

I have identified several positive reasons in support of implementing this project. However, there are some limitations that may serve as barriers to the success of the workshop. One major flaw is that there is no provision in the CAP program for defraying the expenses that I will incur in staging this workshop. My most conservative estimate for staging this project is JA $243,500 or approximately USD $1,790. I will not be able to finance this workshop on my own from my limited resources. I can overcome this challenge by soliciting grants from multiple sponsors to support various parts for the project and thereby spread the expenses among a broad cross-section of supporters. I could also approach the chief administrator of the MoEYI or the National Training

Agency and explain the value of this project and the potential impact in order to gain their partnership in funding the project.

Another major limitation of this project is that the 3 days needed to complete the full workshop is not an adequate amount of time to fully expose participants to the body of knowledge associated with adult education. Three days will only allow enough time for me to introduce the participants to a few aspects of adult education with the hope that they will be motivated to seek and access more detailed training on their own. I tried to mitigate this problem by approaching the principal of one of the island's oldest teachers' colleges and asked if he would be willing to collaborate with me in potentially making this project a customized program of the college. The principal's initial response has been favorable, so I will continue to pursue this opportunity further. I also spoke with critical administrators from the MoEYI on the matter of placing greater emphasis on adult education, and they expressed a willingness to consider it.

Another possible limitation for this project is the issue of a limited number of substitute teachers in the school system, with some areas having no available substitutes. This issue means that principals would find it difficult to release their teachers to attend workshops during regular school hours. I would, therefore, run the risk of having no or low attendance at AESW. I will mitigate this risk by scheduling the workshop during the holiday period when teachers will not usually have regular teaching sessions.

Recommendations for Alternative Approaches

Ways to Address the Problem Differently

Notwithstanding the findings of this study, there are alternative ways that CAP administrators might pursue to address the problem of dropouts. One of those ways might

be to offer a stipend to CAP students to attend their courses consistently. In addition, because the CAP students have other persons for whom they are responsible, the administrators could use the number of dependents a student has as one of the factors that would be considered when determining the level of stipend a student receives. Even though offering a stipend may be an effective way to handle some of the issues facing students, administrators would need to ensure that recipients do not pervert the process by collecting the stipend without attending classes. Administrators may implement a timecard to register attendance at classes. If the administrators can afford implementing an electronic system for students to record their attendance, I would recommend implementing such a system because they would be able to monitor and manage student attendance records more efficiently than using a manual system.

Another alternative approach that CAP administrators could consider in reducing the incidence of dropouts is to provide transportation from designated points in communities where the bulk of CAP students reside. This guaranteed transportation could give CAP students a sense of safety, particularly in circumstances where violence is prevalent and transportation is scarce. The transportation service would also be a welcome benefit because many CAP students were unable to attend schools because they lacked the bus fare to make it to the school. This guaranteed transportation would also help overcome the factor of community violence that caused some students to drop out of CAP. Because community violence caused many transport operators to stop operating by early evening each day, many students faced dangerous situations as they tried to reach home when classes ended at nights. Guaranteed transportation would solve the violence

issue and would help students who dropped out for those reasons feel safe in their choice to continue attending CAP courses.

Many current students and dropouts might also welcome a work/study model if it were offered by CAP. This work/study program would involve the students receiving both classroom and on-the-job experiences. By gaining this dual experience, students might find learning more exciting, impactful, and rewarding. They may even prove less likely to drop out of their programs of study.

Perhaps running the CAP as a residential program might yield the most far-reaching results, though it would demand the most resources. This alternative approach is worth considering because students would receive the opportunity of living in a controlled environment where they could learn from each other and reinforce their learning more effectively. Most importantly, the students would receive appropriate levels of resources to satisfy their physical needs, and the students would receive relief from living in the harsh local conditions and from learning antisocial behavior from peers or older citizens as a means of survival that many of them have had to do.

Upon the first examination of this alternative, administrators might consider that this proposition is too expensive. However, the government sets aside a significant budget each year to maintain prisons without the purposeful action of helping the inmates to resocialize or to better reintegrate into society when they regain their freedom. While the government does not get much of a positive return on its investment spent on the prisoners, the investment in a CAP residential program could yield far greater returns for the lives of many single people and families. That positive change would extend into

future generations, making each generation more educated and prepared for real life than the last.

Alternative Definitions of the Problem

The concept of dropouts can be defined in many ways. One of the definitions is that dropouts are those students who leave the education system before the scheduled end date of their programs of study (Voigt & Hundrieser, 2008). This definition may be adequate in some circumstances. However, in other cases, this definition of dropouts may be inadequate. For example, consider the student who left his program after attaining the skill for which he joined. The traditional definition of dropout might not fit him because he achieved his goal and exercised his right to withdraw. Invariably, this student would not have had the opportunity of determining the curriculum in the first place, but after learning the skill that he wanted, he no longer needs to remain in the program. Maybe an approach to resolving this issue might be to develop and offer programs in modules so students can choose what they are interested in instead of being constrained with the need to take the full program. Program administrators might receive guidance from various categories of students such as (a) dropouts, (b) current students, and (c) prospective students, on their learning needs and how they would like their programs to be structured. By including students in the program development process, administrators might be more effective and efficient in satisfying the learning needs of their students.

Administrators sometimes consider dropouts to be to students who have left the CAP to take up employment. This set of students might not be regarded as dropouts in a practical sense because they remained engaged in work, which is the expected outcome of every program. Students who find employment while studying may simply consider

their reason for joining programs like the CAP fulfilled. Some students who leave full-time training programs to take up employment sometimes complete their programs by attending part-time school in the evenings, weekends or through online study.

Alternative Solutions to the Problem

CAP programs are offered primarily in the same secondary schools where the CAP students had received their secondarily level education. Many CAP students fail there because these educational aspects remain the same in their CAP classes as what the students experienced in secondary school. Many students failed to perform at their best, academically speaking, during secondary school. Some may even say that secondary school administrators were unable to help students to excel and grow as far as their innate potential would allow. The CAP students, after completing secondary school, returned to their schools to receive more of the same style of learning experience, which has already proven to be ineffectual during their earlier years in school.

As another potential solution, some CAP schools could be constructed or retrofitted to be more appropriate for adult learners. Classrooms for adult students should be furnished and organized in ways that suit the way adults learn. For example, many adults like to share their experiences. Therefore, classroom furnishings could be arranged so participants can see each other's faces as they discuss and work together. Thus, they can learn how to better collaborate, to be more creative and brainstorm, and to learn other basic job skills that they can go on to implement either on the job or in life. By making this point about the classroom setting, I am inadvertently advocating for a change in teaching methodology as well, a change that would be more suitable for adult learners and would need to be supported by many adult learning theories.

Invariably, CAP teachers are the same teachers who teach at secondary schools. They often do not receive training to teach adult learners. An alternative solution to the problem of dropouts might be to train new teachers for CAP students or to provide existing teachers with appropriate training on how to teach adult learners. By receiving this training in adult education and teaching methods, CAP teachers would learn how to prepare and implement lessons for adult learners. The teachers for CAP would no longer treat their students as children but could instead relate to their students as adults.

The CAP teachers who receive training to teach adults should refrain from heavy use of the black or whiteboard as their primary teaching tool. The teachers should use various forms of technology to facilitate learning. For example, adults learn more effectively when teachers base their lessons on real world problems and situations, and students should be engaged in trying to solve those problems. This approach would be a major departure from the traditional theoretical approach to learning, which was often abstract and far removed from the true experiences of students.

Most students are fearful of the traditional approach to assessing learning, which is through written examinations. Teachers could use more appropriate assessment methods, such as oral presentations, projects, and portfolios. Apart from changing the assessment methods, school administrators and teachers could focus on building skills that workers in the 21st century should have. Some of these skills might be critical thinking, social, communication, and productivity skills. CAP students can build or improve their resume writing, interviewing, or even grooming skills. Students would be more prepared for the workplace if they have the technical skills to do the job, but there is

also power in the soft skills they should have so they can successfully bid for a job in the first place, and then retain said job for a long time.

Scholarship Preparing Me for Leadership in My Project and for Change

Learning From the Process

In preparing for the AESW, I reflected on my role as a student while completing my doctoral studies and on my role as a facilitator who could address the problems I found during my research. As a doctoral student, I expected to adopt the persona of a scholar. As a scholar, my natural disposition was to treat the process of conducting a research as an extraordinary learning experience which required me to improve my skills in attention, recollection, data processing, communication and critical thinking in a coordinated manner (Center for Development and Learning, 2010).

During my quest to fulfill this dual role of student and scholar, I was somewhat conflicted. Still, I settled on the notion that organizations were sometimes more complex than the theories and conceptual frameworks suggested. Theories and conceptual frameworks provide theoretical guidance to any intervention that I might make in an organization and play the same role as a map to a traveler (Hoy, Miskel, & Tarter, 2013). I settled my internal conflict by designating myself as a scholar-practitioner who could strive for professional excellence with a firm grounding in theory and research, informed by experiential knowledge, and motivated by personal values (Distefano, Rudestam, & Silverman, 2004, p. 393). I realized that I am better prepared now to be a leader and to implement this workshop than I had previously felt possible because of what I have studied, learned, and done in this doctoral program.

Personal Learning and Growth

During the process of conducting this research, I will admit that I did not realize how much transformation I would experience. The process I followed, the experiences I encountered, and the vast body of knowledge I perused all had a profound impact on the way I process the world around me. Looking back, my decision to pursue this body of work has taken me through a complete metamorphosis. I entered the program confident that I was a professional. I first had to settle a raging self-debate of whether to register for a Ph.D. or an EdD program. I decided to pursue an EdD degree because of my interest in becoming a practicing professional with theoretical backing, what I now realize is a "scholar practitioner." This term was not a part of my repertoire then, but I was clear in knowing that I was interested in exploring solutions to existing problems.

I did not anticipate that teacher training and preparation would be the problem I focused on in my project. As I reflected on the responses I received from the participants and analyzed the data, I determined three broad themes. I called the themes factors for dropouts, factors for supporting CAP students, and factors for teacher training and preparation. I chose to give priority in this project to the area of teacher training and preparation because I believed, and still believe, that teachers who receive additional training will increase their self-efficacy. Teachers with higher self-efficacy often receive higher ratings from their students regarding the quality of classroom instruction (Goddard, Hoy, & Woolfolk Hoy, 2004; Toropova, Johansson, & Myrberg, 2019, p. 293). If teachers experience higher self-efficacy, hopefully, their experience might have a ripple effect on their students. Most of the interactions between teachers and students take place in the classroom. We should ensure that teachers receive adequate training to

improve the quality of teaching and student outcomes (Kleickmann, Tröbst, Jonen, Vehmeyer, & Möller, 2016). The issue of students' learning outcomes is a constant concern for teachers and school administrators, a concern they often feel they have to manage separately as they try to find new and more effective ways of relating to their students. Based on my research, affecting student outcomes can be, and should be, a natural result of teachers who are trained on how to relate and teach each of their students.

The teachers conceded that they needed exposure in the area of adult education. The principal of one Jamaican teachers' college endorsed my finding that teachers did not receive instruction on how to teach adults, which gave credence to this project as a legitimate concern. I look forward to executing this project, which I hope will be the beginning of significant changes in the adult education landscape of my country.

Leadership and Change

The concepts of leadership and change have separate and distinct meanings. However, they appear inseparable in their functionality. Leadership, then, can be viewed as the power of a person to influence or change the values, beliefs, behavior, and attitudes of another person (Ganta & Manukonda, 2014). Leadership can also be viewed as a process by which leaders can get their employees to pursue the desired goals of the organization (Jackson & Parry, 2008). Many have credited the Greek philosopher, Heraclitus, with the expression that change is the only constant feature in life (Graham, 2019). Leaders of entities continuously grapple with the changes they need to make in response to the context in which they operate. The people who work in such entities are often uncomfortable in responding to change by leaving their comfort zones and

adjusting their usual way of operating (Lorenzoni, Nicholson-Cole, & Whitmarsh, 2007). Building leadership capacity across the whole spectrum of organizations is critical with the explosion of collaborative problem-solving approaches and the reliance on digital technology that empowers individuals at all levels of the organization to make decisions that can have far reaching impact on the organization (Harvard Business Review, 2019).

Not every situation will be the same. Leaders, therefore, should adopt or modify their leadership styles to fit each situation. Some of the most familiar leadership categories in schools are instructional, transformational, and moral (Hussin & Waheed, 2016). As an instructional leader, the leadership style impacts teachers' motivational level and job satisfaction, and the technique should be responsive to the changes school experiences over time (Waheed, Hussin, & Bin Megat Daud, 2018).

School leaders should disrupt the status quo and be willing to explore new ways of delivering educational opportunities. The leadership in one school in Utah in the United States of America took the initiative in converting their school into a student-oriented school. They rejected the subject-oriented system and restructured their curriculum with the express focus of building the following: (a) the power of knowing, (b) the power of will, (c) the power of curiosity, (d) the power of imagination, and (e) the power of love in their students. By fostering these powers, students accomplished more than they did under the traditional system (Stoddard, 2019). This new approach requires leadership in order to achieve revolutionary change while also gaining the support of both parents and teachers who successfully make the change.

Reflections on the Importance of This Research Work

This research is essential, timely, and relevant in many respects. In going through the data during this research process, I was able to see the age-old problem of school dropouts in an entirely new light. Usually, the dropouts and their families shouldered the consequences that come from dropping out. I now realize that the implications of having a high dropout rate in Jamaica has so many far-reaching consequences for the country as a whole that it would be irresponsible not to view dropouts as a national problem. With that in mind, the problem of dropouts needs to be treated as a national imperative. I hope to use this study to raise awareness among critical stakeholders at various levels of the education sector in order to propel them to act to reduce the rate of dropouts and where possible, to commit more significant resources to assist some of those who dropped out to return and complete their studies.

One of the startling revelations for me was the recognition that when students drop out before completing their program of study, they leave school without acquiring all the necessary skills to become work ready. Invariably, they end up in the job market underprepared in terms of skills and attitude. They therefore can only attract entry-level jobs where their productive capacity will likely be negligible. Their earnings are low most of the time, and most importantly, their contribution to the country's revenue by way of taxes will be insignificant, if not nonexistent. Often dropouts find themselves in situations where they become a strain on the national income by receiving benefits from social security services.

This study is also crucial in bringing into sharper focus that dropouts not only find entry-level jobs and work, but they find other things to do with their time when they are

not in class and were also unemployed. Gangs and other antisocial groups often recruit from the group of students who dropout, and if dropouts aren't recruited, they are sometimes led to engage in other antisocial activities, thus becoming threats to national security. In some instances, these dropouts suffered under health conditions that appeared after they were unable to attend to their own health. Safety and health are two significant concerns that the country is grappling with, and there are no easy answers. If efforts can be made to stem the rate of dropouts, there could be a significant improvement in the social and health issues throughout Jamaica.

This study is also essential because of the additional reasons for dropouts that relate to professional teacher training. These reasons bring into sharp focus the need for greater emphasis on providing training for adult educators in the area of adult education. Local teachers received training to teach up to the secondary level. With time, experience, and additional qualifications, most teachers gain promotions to teach at the post-secondary level where they interface with adult students. Because of their lack of training in adult education, these teachers often treat their adult students in the same way that their teachers treated them while they were at the young adult stage.

The spotlight is not only on teachers, but on administrators also because they often subject adult students to similar, if not the same, rules they use for their younger students. The rules that caused the most issues were rules that attempted to control attendance and punctuality, dress code, and conduct. Outside of how adult students are treated, training in adult education is often not required for local teaching to qualify to teach at the post-secondary level. If I were to use a simple analogy to illustrate this point, we could liken this situation to a person who was licensed to drive a motor car. Still,

without upgrading his skills and his license, he moved on to operate a heavy-duty vehicle. Though just an analogy, it highlights how illogical it is for us to ask teachers with no training in how to do that level of training to then somehow successfully teach adults.

If the area of teacher training and preparation were the only area I addressed in this study, it would still be hugely successful. However, the other two areas, factors for dropouts and factors for supporting CAP students, are no less critical and these factors could each become subjects of focus in future work.

From a personal point of view, through this study, I have grown tremendously as a scholar and practitioner. I am much better able to examine issues both in my private and professional capacities critically. Challenges no longer sway me, but I approach problems as matters that are solvable by applying the appropriate tools. I am aware that scholars have solutions to many of the issues I face, so I will seek to identify relevant references to ground my argument or courses of action to lend credibility and validity to my decisions instead of merely acting on impulse.

I recognized that pursuing a master's degree and a doctoral degree is like the difference between night and day or summer and winter. In my earlier readings, I learned that the pursuit of a doctoral degree is a long and lonely journey. Those who have walked that road before me have discovered the loneliness the journey can bring, and I have found it no different. However, I found that the strategy for completing my doctoral work was to remain focused, purposeful, and consistent. By doing a little work each day, I was able to cover much more ground than I otherwise would have had I waited for an appropriate time when I had a considerable period to do my work. That extra period never came. My professional work became more demanding and required more of my

time and energy, and thus I responded by becoming more resourceful and creative in my use of time.

I became an entirely self-directed learner from doing this program. As a self-directed learner, I set targets, identified resources that I needed and pursued goals until I achieved them. I recognized that I was almost entirely responsible if I were to achieve my goals because I have no parents or teachers to check if I had done my homework and then insist that I do it. I feel extremely gratified that I stayed motivated, even when I had challenges. I can therefore be a source of encouragement and support to those who embark on their doctoral journey and may be wavering in their convictions to continue.

Implications, Applications, and Directions for Future Research

Many countries all over the world grapple with the problem of dropouts. It does not matter if the countries are wealthy or poor, developed or underdeveloped, offer free tuition or require students to pay their way to a degree. Dropouts are a feature of life for students because each student has his or her own needs, aspirations, and challenges. Each student must choose to remain in a program to the end. They must overcome the external and internal problems that could influence them against their goal to complete their studies.

Potential Impact for Positive Social Change

The productive capacity of the human resources of a country could be compromised if the problem of dropouts is not addressed. Therefore, government administrators could encourage adding national programs so that as more of the workforce becomes educated, the future prospects of prosperity for the country increase.

Implications for social change. There were several implications associated with this research on students dropping out. One consequence is that students who drop out of their programs leave school without acquiring all the competencies required for their chosen fields of study. Human capital (education and experience) is the first of three determinants of labor productivity, the other two being technological change and economies of scale (Greenlaw et al., 2016). Leaders of successive governments in Jamaica may do well to focus on building the human aspect of the national resources on the island because there is the likelihood that the improved capacity of Jamaicans will translate into increased productivity across the island.

Another implication of dropping out is that the government loses the significant amount of resources it invests in students before they choose to leave school without completing their programs. With such premature departures from their programs of study, government administrators could consider the expenses incurred up to that point to be worthless, especially because those dropouts leave before acquiring the level of competence needed to make them functional additions to the workforce.

An important implication for dropouts is that they will not be able to command the type and level of wages needed to live comfortably, to start a family, and to take care of themselves. They may then become a burden on the state and some may pursue a life of crime as a result (Belfield & Levin, 2007; Rumberger, 2011; Swanson, 2009).

Potential impact for positive social change. If through this study I am able to help more CAP administrators reduce their dropout rate and even recover some of the students that have previously dropped out, I believe that the impact of such an outcome

would extend into and affect (a) individuals, (b) families, (c) organizations, and (d) societal policies.

Individuals. From the point of view of the individual, those who complete their programs and receive certification, separate themselves from the many who have not attained such a level of success. In many instances, they are the first in their families to complete a certificate program. Their level of achievement, though low on the totem pole of achievements, represents a significant measure of personal success for each of these students. They often feel empowered to pursue further studies, vie for jobs, and progress in those jobs, and they often feel better about themselves because before their programs, many of them felt worthless because of negative things significant persons in their lives had told them in the past.

Families. Many dropouts are often the products of parents who were dropouts themselves. Recovering some of the students who have dropped out of CAP and encouraging others to remain in the program until graduation, would positively impact both the individual students and their families in many ways. One of the ways is that often it breaks a cycle of non-achievement in the family. The newfound achievement of a student who has graduate transcends an individual's victory and becomes an achievement for the entire family. Some parents, after experiencing their children's successes, return to school and complete their own programs of study. Many of these examples exist in Jamaican households. In addition, students who are newly certified can vie for better paying jobs which can only improve the economic welfare of their family. This effort has been the reality in many Jamaican households with parents who are able to improve their quality of life as more of their children complete their studies and to improve their

earning power. Initially, some parents might not have supported the education of their children, but as the student's complete their programs through the support of others, parents can start to see the value of their children completing their education.

Organizations. The impact on organizations of students who complete their studies is also significant. Certified students will go to their places of work with the soft and technical skills needed to perform. These skills will make them a more effective and efficient workforce that may contribute extensively to the improvement and productivity of an organization. Otherwise, the leaders of organizations would have to expend significant resources to train unskilled workers. The extra time needed for remedial training would result in significant periods of down time and inefficiency, and that much down time would ultimately affect the productivity of an organization.

Societal policies. The wealth of a society is directly related to how educated its people are. The more individuals in a country who hold decent paying jobs, the more money they can contribute to the national purse by way of taxes and the more they can spend to boost the local economy. As a matter of policy, government administrators should be able to see the connection between low educational levels and low employment/poverty. Equally, if administrators can understand the impact education truly has on a country's people, then they could see the benefit of enforcing a compulsory education policy for everyone up to age 18, a policy they implemented several years ago. Government administrators could further make more funding available in the form of loans and grants to all students who wish to further their studies. These policies would go a long way towards boosting the educational levels of the people of Jamaica.

Methodological, Theoretical, and Empirical Implications

Methodological. I used the basic qualitative research design as an exploratory tool to assist me in identifying the meanings that participants placed on their experiences. This method enabled me to focus on a real-life local problem to capture data in order to derive meaning of the complexity of the reasons why students drop out of the CAP. Three guiding research questions facilitated this process, questions that have been outlined earlier in this document. In the process of collecting and transcribing participant responses, there was a possibility I could have misinterpreted critical aspects of the data. To avoid this possibility, I conferred with the participants using the member checking process to ascertain whether what I had written was what they had meant. The frequency of the problem of dropouts was not the focus, but instead, I sought to decipher the rationale behind why students drop out and to derive meaning from those findings.

Theoretical. I acknowledge that there are many authority figures who have studied the topic of adult learning and school dropouts. I have therefore grounded this study on the theory andragogy and on the concept self-directed learning. Later, I also explored transformational learning theory and then utilized all three theoretical foundations in the professional development workshop I developed. One of the main goals of self-directed learning is to foster transformation, which helps students learn to see the world in new ways, a process that is central to transformational learning theory. I expect that as more adult educators receive exposure to adult learning theories, they will change their attitudes toward their students and will start relating to them as adults instead of treating them like children. I also expect that this study will serve as a catalyst

that prompts policy makers in ministries responsible for education to eventually require adult educators to receive appropriate training to teach adults.

Empirical. I can rely on the outcomes of this study because I did not sit in a room and assume what the experiences of participants might be. Instead, I developed appropriate instruments that I used to capture data in different forms, which I later triangulated to derive meaning. By creating the conditions necessary for collecting experiences with rich detail, I was able to achieve credibility/believability and transferability, because individuals in similar conditions might be able to relate and possibly apply to their situations, the rich findings I gathered from this study. I have equally been able to achieve dependability by detailing the data collection process I used that allowed me, an external auditor, to reconcile the process of triangulating my findings.

Recommendations for Practice and Future Research

Based on my findings, I recommend that responsible authorities in the education sector require that all teachers expected to teach adult learners should receive training in adult education and instruction. This training could be offered as a special, short course that teachers could take online or face-to-face at one of the island's teachers or community colleges.

The literature indicated that even in countries where tuition is free, education administrators still grapple with dropouts from their programs. One lesson that can be learned from this is that adult students have more challenges than tuition, and they may still drop out of their programs even when their tuition is paid free. Program planners for adults should anticipate the major challenges their adult students might face and consider

those challenges that could cause them to drop out. The authorities should then make adequate provisions to alleviate those challenges, which might, in the process, serve as mitigating force in reducing the number of dropouts.

As it wasn't within the scope of this project, I did not seek to establish a causal relationship between dropouts and the lack of training in adult education among educators. Neither did I try to investigate the impact such a lack of training might have had on student learning outcomes. Further research could be carried out in these areas to broaden understanding of adult education in Jamaica and to improve the service adult learners receive.

Conclusion

In this study, I sought to gain an understanding of the reasons some students decided to drop out the Career Advancement Program, referred to as CAP in the rest of the study. I categorized the findings under three major themes, (a) factors for dropouts, (b) factors for supporting CAP students, and (c) factors for teacher training and preparation. I selected factors for teacher training and preparation as the basis of my project. The strengths of this project include teaching local educators adult learning theories such as (a) andragogy, (Knowles, 1980), (b) transformational learning, (Mezirow, 1978), (c) multiple-intelligence theory, (Gardner, 2006), (d) theory of load, power, and margin, (McClusky, Illeris, & Jarvis, 2007), and (e) the stages of self-directed learning (Gore et al., (2017), along with several learning activities. I expect that this study will play a significant role in effecting social change, particularly in the area of adult education.

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Appendix A: The Project

Facilitator Notes

Preparation

In preparation for this workshop, several materials will be needed for the efficient and effective execution of the program. Some of the materials include these: double pocket folders, note pads, pens, highlighters, permanent markers, flipchart easel and paper, sticky pads, resource materials, course schedule, and audio-visual tools (laptop computer, multimedia projector, projector screen, speaker, pointer).

Room setup: Boardroom style will be used for the training room setup. Participants will be working in teams of five throughout the 3 days of training. Each team will be given flip chart paper and other writing implements. The registration desk will be off the side to the training room entrance for participants to register and collect their training kits and icebreaker sheets. Each table will have a container with cool drinking water with drinking glasses for each participant. Light refreshments comprising hot and cold beverages, pastries, assorted sandwiches, and fruits with appropriate serving implements will be set up at the back of the room. Garbage bins will be appropriately placed in the room to facilitate easy disposal of refuse. Hospitality staff will be assigned to the room to keep it tidy throughout the training period and to serve participants as needed.

This 3-day professional development workshop is designed for teachers and administrators of the Career Advancement Program (CAP) which operates in over 139 centers across the island of Jamaica. This workshop will take place in a conference room

at one of the colleges which participates in the CAP. As the facilitator, I will introduce the various learning goals and lessons based on feedback I received from my prior consultations with participants in the class. Each session will consider what participants were interested in, lectures will be kept to a minimum, and the sessions will be highly interactive to involve group discussions, sharing of experiences, self-reflection, and mini team teaching.

The purpose of the workshop is to sensitize and expose participants to a selection of adult learning theories and appropriate techniques for teaching and interacting with adult learners. I aim to accommodate approximately 15 participants from the CAP centers across the island for the first workshop, but I would be willing to include an additional five participants at the request of school administrators. I intend to incorporate a colleague who is an experienced adult educator who will support me in presenting some of the lessons. Some of the sessions will feature guest speakers who were nationally known educational leaders and administrators. The workshop will take place between the hours of 8:30 am and 4:00 pm during a period when schools were on holidays and will run for 3 successive days using a blended learning approach. This time frame means that I will provide each participant with resource materials and activities electronically a minimum of 2 weeks prior to the workshop, which they will complete before coming to the session each day.

Workshop Timetable

The timetable, found in Table 7, serves as a guide to the workshop. The facilitators will gage each lesson based on the responses and needs of participants and will make any changes which they may deem necessary.

Table A1

AESW Timetable

TIME	DAY 1	DAY 2	DAY 3
8:30 – 9:00	Registration, Welcome and Introduction to the workshop	Recap of Day 1 lesson	Recap of Day 2 lesson
9:00 – 10:00 Session 1	Pedagogy vs Andragogy Dr. Grace McLean *Permanent Secretary (Act'g), Ministry of Education, Youth & Information*	Transformational Learning Theory Mr. Eron McLean *EdD Candidate, Walden University*	Mini-Teaching lesson to class, modelled to address multiple intelligence
10:00 – 10:15	**BREAK**	**BREAK**	**BREAK**
10:15-11:15 Session 2	Group conference and presentations on differences between pedagogy & andragogy	Open Discussion Participants will reflect and then share their own experience of transformational learning	Mini-Teaching by class members to address multiple intelligence Discussion
11:15-12:15 Session 3	Self-Directed learning Mr. Eron McLean *EdD Candidate, Walden University* Activity: Self-reflection as self-directed learners	Video Presentation and Group Discussions	Team Evaluation & Feedback
12:15-1:15	**LUNCH**	**LUNCH**	**LUNCH**
1:15-2:15 Activity 1 & 2	Activity 1 – Personal Reflection (15 mins) 1:15-1:30pm	Multiple Intelligence Theory	Load, power and margin theory Presentation

(table continues)

TIME	DAY 1	DAY 2	DAY 3
	Activity 2 – Reflection on Students & Experience Sharing (45 mins.) 1:30-2:15pm	Mr. Eron McLean *EdD Candidate, Walden University* &Dr. Dosseth Edwards-Watson *Principal, Trench Town Polytechnic College*	Mr. Eron McLean *EdD Candidate, Walden University*
2:15-2:30	**BREAK**	**BREAK**	**BREAK**
2:30-3:30 Activity 3	Activity 3 – Practical Ways to Help Students to Become Self-Directed Learners	Group Preparation for Team-Teaching	Summary of Workshop Workshop Evaluation
3:30-4:00 Activity 4 & 5	Activity 4 – Issuance of Team-Teaching Assignment, lesson plan template & evaluation form (15MINS.) 3:30-3:45PM Activity 5: Reflection and Experience Sharing (15MINS.) 3:45-4:00PM	Group Preparation for Team-Teaching	Complete evaluation, awarding of certificates and Closure
4:00PM		**END OF DAY**	

Day 1 Introduction

Day 1 Session 1

Welcome and Introduction/Schedule and Goals/Developing the workshop
(8:30 – 9:00 am)
I will introduce myself, and then I will ask participants to introduce themselves and to share unique facts about themselves such as the subject they teach, how long they have been working at the school, and what they hope to learn in this workshop. I will briefly give an overview of the 3-day workshop and introduce the procedures, goals, and objectives for the professional development session. I will assist the participants to

develop a list of norms and ground rules for the workshop by asking them, "When you were in a workshop, what do you look forward to the most, and what do you dread the most?" Record their responses on a poster sheet and pin it on the wall.

Opening Presentation - Guest Instructor – Dr. Grace McLean *Permanent Secretary (Act'g), Ministry of Education, Youth & Information* will give a presentation - Compare pedagogical and andragogical approaches (9:00 – 10:00 am)

Learning Objectives: At the end of the session, participants will be able to:

- Define the terms pedagogy and andragogy
- Discuss the main differentiating characteristics between pedagogy and andragogy
- Discuss the assumptions of andragogy

Introduction (5 minutes) The facilitator asks participants to explain the meaning of the word "pedagogy".

- Different participants will state their understanding of what pedagogy means.
- The facilitator summarizes the definition of pedagogy as follows:
  It is the art or profession of teaching

  It is the preparatory training or instruction.

  Step 1 (10 min.).
- The facilitator using interactive approach asks participants to explain their understanding of the term andragogy. (2 mins)
- After receiving responses from participants, facilitator will give a summarized definition of andragogy as ways of facilitating adult learning. (3 mins)
- Facilitator will then outline and discuss the assumptions of andragogy (25 mins):
  (1) has an independent self-concept and who can direct his or her own learning,

  (2) has accumulated a portfolio of life experiences which can be used as valuable resource for learning,

(3) has learning needs which were congruent with his/her changing social roles,
(4) is problem-centered and interested in immediate application of knowledge (Knowles, 1980),
(5) is motivated to learn by internal rather than external influences, and
(6) adults need to know why they need to learn something (Knowles, 1984)

COFFEE BREAK (15 mins) 10:00-10:15am

Day 1 Session 2 (1 HOUR) 10:15-11:15AM

The Facilitator will divide the class into five groups. Each group will prepare to lead the discussion in one of the following topics pertaining to the chart which outlines differences between pedagogy and andragogy (1 hour).

Differentiating Features Between Pedagogy and Andragogy

Pedagogy

1. The learners are children
2. The learners rely heavily on the teachers for guidance and direction.
3. The teachers are at the center of all major decisions during the learning process e.g. What learners should learn, the methods of instruction and methods of assessment.
4. Learners offer very little to the body of knowledge being shared because of their limited experience. The teachers' experience take prominence.
5. The student is given set learning paths to follow in order to progress from one stage to another
6. Curriculum is set and delivered in a structured way
7. The student is motivated mostly by external factors e.g. Pressure from family, promise of a gift

Andragogy

1. The student is either on a path or has attained self-directed learning status
2. Student has the capacity to assess their own progress
3. Students have vast amount of experience to share and add richness to the lesson based on their diverse experiences
4. Teacher's experiences are less dominant throughout the learning experience
5. Student' readiness to learn is prompted by different factors which vary from one person to another e.g., the prospect of a job promotion
6. Learning must be practical and relevant to solve problems, not subject content centered
7. The student is internally motivated e.g. Better self-image, self-actualization

Group Conference and Presentations- Facilitator Eron McLean -*EdD Candidate* **–**Difference between Pedagogy and Andragogy (10:15-11:15am)

1. The Learner:

1. Based on the description outlined in the chart, how would you describe your learners?
2. Give two examples of your learners being self-directed.
3. How have you assisted your students to take responsibility for their learning?

2. The Role of Learner's Experience

1. Based on your knowledge about your learners, how much value can their experience add to your lessons?
2. As an instructor, describe the level of diversity which exist in a typical class and how can you make use of such diversity to enrich the learning experience?

3. Readiness to learn

1. As their instructor, how would you describe your students' level of readiness to learn?
2. What have you noticed to be the greatest promoters or inhibitors to their learning?

4. Orientation to learning

1. As their instructor, how would you describe your learners' willingness to carry out assigned tasks or use their initiative to carry out extra work on their own?
2. Based on your assessment, how relevant were the courses which students take to real life?

5. Motivation for learning

1. How would you describe your students' level of self-esteem and how has that affected their motivation to learn?
2. Describe your learners' level of intrinsic motivation.
3. Participants will cluster in groups of three to discuss the questions. They will make notes and make mini presentations to the entire class when the class reconvenes.

Group Presentation (5 mins per group)

- Each group will assign a leader who will present the group's responses to their assigned task.
- The facilitator will give a brief summary of the main points highlighted by each group which will set the context for the remainder of the workshop.
- Facilitator will summarize and lead a question and answer session involving the full class (10 mins)

Day 1 Session Three Morning

Self-Directed Learning –Guest Instructor- Dr. Dosseth Edwards-Watson & Eron McLean
(1 hr) (11:15am- 12:15pm)
Learning Objectives:

The participants will be able to:

1. Explain the term self-directed learning
2. Describe Grow's stages of self-directed learning
3. Assess their individual stage as self-directed learners
4. Assess the self-directed learning stage of one of their students.

   Participants will have the option of sharing their individual self-assessment with the group. They will, however, share their assessment of their student with the group. The identity of the students will be kept confidential.

Introduction

Various participants will be asked to explain the term self-directed learning. After listening to all the contributions, facilitator provides a summary of participants' ideas of self-directed learning, and then will provide an explanation of his own.

Day 1: Session three

Participants will be referred to Grow's stages of self-directed learning and then asked for volunteers to read each of the four stages:

1. Stage one learners **(dependent learners)** have low levels of self-direction and depend heavily on authority figures such as teachers to tell them what to do.
2. Stage two learners **(interested learners)** have moderate levels of self-direction. They were often motivated and interested to learn but were very limited of the subject matter to be learned. Their teachers would need to start from the most basic levels and gradually advance.
3. Stage three learners **(involved learners)** were at intermediate levels of self-direction. They have basic skills and knowledge which position them to explore and learn more advanced levels of a subject matter.
4. Stage four learners were **self-directed learners**. They take full responsibility for their own learning by planning, implementing, and appraising their learning without the guidance and supervision of an authority figure (Grow, 1991,1994)

Facilitator will entertain brief reactions to each from participants.

LUNCH BREAK (1 hour) 12:15-1:15pm

Day 1: Session Three Afternoon

Individual Activity 1 – Facilitator –Eron Mclean Self-reflection (15 mins) 1:15-1:30pm

Facilitator will ask each participant to write a brief self-reflection on the stage of self-directed learning which they have attained. Participants who were willing will be given the opportunity of sharing their reflections with the group.
Reactions from other participants

Activity 2 - Reflection on students and experience sharing (45 mins) 1:30- 2:15pm

Facilitator will ask each participant to identify one of his or her students and say which stage of self-directed learning is that student and give justification for his/her selection.
Reactions from other participants
Summary of day one's activities and participants' feedback

AFTERNOON BREAK (15 MINS) 2:15- 2:30PM

Activity 3 – Facilitator –Eron Mclean –Practical Ways to Help Students to Become Self-Directed Learners (1 hour) 2:30-3:30pm

Activity 4 – Issuance of Team-Teaching Assignment, Introduction to Lesson Plan Template and Team-Teaching Evaluation Form (15 mins.) 3:30-3:45pm

Activity 5 – Reflection and Experience Sharing (15 mins.) 3:45-4:00pm

END OF DAY 1

DAY 2

Recap of Day 1 – Facilitator – Eron McLean – 8:30am – 9:00pm

Day 2 Session 1

Transformational Learning Theory – Facilitator – Eron McLean – 9:00am – 10:00am

Learning Objectives:

The participants should be able to:

1. Critically examine a story and orally expressed their views on the related questions
2. Explain the concept of transformative learning
3. Give two examples of habits of the mind and suggest possible causes of such habits
4. Share their personal experiences as transformative learners
5. Discuss possible ways in which they may become facilitators of transformational learning

Introduction

1. Attendees will be introduced to the Transformational Learning Theory with an activity for adults on perspective. One participant will be asked to read a story of three blind men and an elephant (Frame of Reference). Each participant will be given a personal copy in their resource folder so they will be able to follow while the reading is taking place. They will listen and make their private notes. (5 mins)

Frame of Reference (Story)

Six blind men were introduced to an elephant, and then were asked to describe what an elephant looked like.

The **first** felt of the elephant's **side** and told the others that the elephant was like a **wall.**

The **second**, however, grabbed the elephant's **trunk** and concluded that an elephant was like a **snake**.

The **third** blind man touched the **smooth surface of its tusk** and was impressed to discover that the elephant was a **hard, spear-like creature**.

The **fourth** man who touched the elephant's **legs**, and therefore decided that it was like a **tree trunk**.

However, the **fifth** man, after feeling of its **tail**, disdainfully announced that the elephant was nothing but a **frayed piece of rope**.

Last of all, the **sixth** blind man, standing beside the **elephant's slowly flapping ear**, felt of the ear itself and determined that the elephant was a **sort of living fan**.

These six blind men went back to their city, shared their perspectives of what an elephant looked like. They each got supporters who bought into their respective points of view and big debates ensued as to who was right.

The only person who did not join in these debates was a **seventh blind man**, much older than the others, who had visited the elephant after the other six. While the others rushed off with their separate conclusions, the seventh blind man had taken the time to **pet the elephant**, to **walk all around it**, to **smell it**, to **feed i**t, and **to listen to the sounds** it made. When he returned to the city and found the populace in a state of uproar between the six factions, the old man laughed to himself. He was the only person in the city who was not convinced by the previous six. He knew exactly what an elephant was like.

Facilitator will engage the class in open discussions around the following questions:

1. How did the approach of the first six blind men affect their perspective of what an elephant looked like?
2. How do we view the supporters of the six blind men who accepted the perspectives of each of the six and were willing to defend their perspectives?
3. What approach would you use to get the six blind men and their supporters to change their frame of reference?
4. How effective might the seventh blind man be in getting the others to change their frame of reference?
5. (Any) three persons across the room will be asked to share their experience of a time they only had a part of the information and how it affected their perspective and decisions.

Facilitator will give a presentation on transformational learning. Please see samples below of the words for the slides in the presentation. (30 mins)

ADULT Learning- Transformational Learning Theory

Most persons were accustomed to assimilative learning.

Transformative learning can be met with much resistance as students have successfully used assimilative learning to pass exams and progress through school and understand the world.

Their reluctance to abandon what they believe is the right way to think, create, and solve problems is understandable.

Instructors who wish to facilitate transformative learning must create an environment that encourages and rewards intellectual openness (Taylor, 1998)

ADULT Learning- Transformational Learning Theory

Transformative Learning Theory (Mezirow, 1990s)

Transformative learning is the process of causing change in a frame of reference. Frames of reference were the structures of assumptions through which we understand our experiences. They selectively shape and define expectations, perceptions, perceptions and reasoning.

Adults have acquired a coherent body of experience: associates, concepts, values, feeling, conditioned responses, and frames of reference that define their life world.

Describes how people develop and used critical self- reflecting to consider their beliefs and experiences, and over time, change perspectives of the world.

Habits of the Mind

- Persisting
- Thinking about Thinking
- Striving for accuracy Questioning and Posing Problems
- Gathering Data Through All Senses
- Creating, Imagining, Innovating
- Taking Responsible Risks
- Finding Humor
- Remaining Open to Continuous Learning.

COFFEE BREAK (15 mins) 10:00-10:15am

Day 2 Session 2 & 3

Open Discussion (1 hour) 10:15- 11:15

Participants will reflect and share their own experience of transformational learning.

Video Presentation & Group Discussion and presentation (1 hour) 11:15- 12:15

The group will view a video presentation on transformational learning theory and discuss ways in which, participants they may incorporate transformational learning theory in their own classes.

LUNCH BREAK (1 hour) 12:15- 1:15pm

Day 2: Session 3 Afternoon

Activity 1 –Multiple Intelligence Theory Presentation – Dr. Dosseth Edwards-Watson & Eron McLean (1hour) 1:15- 2:15

Learning Objectives: The participants will be able to:

1. Identify at least four different ways of learning in the poem
2. Match the intelligences which they experienced in their classes with the intelligences identified in Multiple Intelligence Theory
3. Discuss possible ways that teachers could facilitate their students of multiple intelligences in their classes
4. Prepare a 10 minutes lesson to teach a class on the topic of multiple intelligences

Introduction

The multiple intelligence theory will be introduced using the poem "Just Playing" by

Just Playing
By Anita Wadley

When I'm building in the block room, please don't say I'm "just playing"
For you see, I'm learning as I play, about balance and shapes.
Who knows? I may be an architect someday.

When I am getting dressed up, setting the table, caring for the babies.
Don't get the idea I'm "just playing". For you see, I'm learning as I play.
I may be a mother or a father someday.

When you see me up to my elbows in paint or standing at an easel, or moulding and shaping clay, please don't let me hear you say "He is just playing"
For you see, I'm learning as I play, I'm expressing myself and being creative.
I may be an artist or an inventor someday.

When you see me sitting in a chair "reading" to an imaginary audience.
Please do not laugh and think I'm "just playing".
For you see, I'm learning as I play.
I may be a teacher someday.

When you see me combing the bushes for bugs, or packing my pockets with choice things I find, don't pass it off as "just playing". For you see, I'm learning as I play.
I may be a scientist someday.

When you see me engrossed in a puzzle or some "plaything" at school.
Please don't feel the time is wasted in "play". For you see, I'm learning as I play.
I'm learning to solve problems and to concentrate.
I may be in business someday.

When you see me cooking or tasting foods, please don't think that because I enjoy it, it is "just playing". I'm learning to follow directions and see differences.
I may be a chef someday.

When you see me learning to skip, hop, run and move my body, please don't say I'm "just
playing". For you see, I'm learning as I play. I'm learning how my body works.
I may be a doctor, nurse, or athlete someday.

When you ask me what I've done at school today, and I say, "I just played"
Please don't misunderstand me. For you see, I'm learning as I play.
I'm learning to enjoy and be successful in my work. I'm preparing for tomorrow.
Today, I am a child and my work is play.

Retrieved on November 10, 2019 from https://www.pragmaticmom.com/2010/09/just-playing-by-anita-wadley-poem-for-parents-of-small-children/. I received permission from the author to include this poem in my study in an e-mail on Thursday, November 28, 2019.

Instructions

1. Participants will be given a copy of the poem and one person will read it aloud. (5 mins)
2. Participants will be asked to share their thoughts on the poem. The aim is to confirm that there were various ways to learning and that teaching should also be done in varying ways. (15 mins)
3. Presenters will give a presentation on Multiple Intelligence Theory. See power point slide below (15 mins)

Table A2

Multiple Intelligence Descriptor Table

Intelligence	Strengths	Description	Careers
Linguistic	Smart with words	Reading\ writing poetry	Poets
Logical-mathematical	Smart with numbers	Abstract thinkers	Mathematicians, engineers
Visual/Spatial	Smart in creating pictures	Think in terms of physical space e.g.	Architects, land surveyors
Bodily-Kinesthetic	Body Smart	Aware & good use of body	Dancers, doctors
Musical	Music Smart	Loves music, shows sensitivity to rhythm & sound	Musicians
Interpersonal	People Smart	Interacts well with others	Sales people, politicians,
Intrapersonal	Self-Smart	Intune with their inner feelings, they have wisdom, intuition	Psychologists, counselors
Naturalist	Smart with nature	Close to nature	Environmentalist, farmers

Open Discussion

1. Participants will be asked to share some of the intelligences which they identified in their students and what strategies which they adopted in teaching those students. (30 mins)
2. Participants will be asked to respond to the feedback of their peers and share another perspective on how teachers could respond in the future. (30 mins)

Group Work Activity

In their groups, teachers will prepare a 10 minutes lesson to address the multiple intelligences of students in one of their classes (1 hour)

AFTERNOON BREAK (15 MINS) 2:15- 2:30PM

Activity 2 –Group Preparation for Team Teaching (1hour 30 minutes) 2:30- 4:00pm

END OF DAY 2

DAY 3-Morning

Recap of Day 1 – Facilitator – Eron McLean – 8:30am – 9:00pm

Day 3 Session 1

Team Teaching Presentation Prepared by Groups (1 hour) 9:00-10am **–**Each group will demonstrate the 20-minute lesson they planned on day 2.

COFFEE BREAK (15 MINS) 10:00- 10:15AM

Team Teaching Presentation Prepared by Groups Continued (1 hour) 10:15-11:15am

LESSON PLAN GUIDE FOR TEAM TEACHING

Title of Lesson:

Date:

Duration of lesson:

General Objectives:

Specific Objectives:

- **Knowledge**
- **Skill**
- **Attitude**

Resources needed:

PROCEDURES

INSTRUCTORS WILL	PARTICIPANTS WILL	METHODOLOGY	EVALUATION
Session 1			
Session 2			
Session 3			

TEAM TEACHING EVALUATION FORM

At the end of each team-teaching exercise, please tick the response which most closely represent your assessment.

1. **The goals of the lesson were clearly outlined at the beginning of the class.**
    - **Completely Agree**
    - **Agree**
    - **Neutral**
    - **Disagree**
    - **Completely Disagree**
2. **The lesson was consistent with the goals/objectives stated.**
    - **Completely Agree**
    - **Agree**
    - **Neutral**
    - **Disagree**
    - **Completely Disagree**
3. **Adult learning techniques were evident throughout the lesson.**
    - **Completely Agree**
    - **Agree**
    - **Neutral**
    - **Disagree**
    - **Completely Disagree**
4. **Teaching methodology used captured the attention of the class.**
    - **Completely Agree**
    - **Agree**

- **Neutral**
- **Disagree**
- **Completely Disagree**

5. **The facilitators taught the lesson clearly so that I could understand.**
   - **Completely Agree**
   - **Agree**
   - **Neutral**
   - **Disagree**
   - **Completely Disagree**

Please succinctly answer the following questions in the space provided. If you have more to say than the space allows, please do so on the back of this form.

6. **Areas for commendation**

_____

_____

_____

7. **Areas needing improvement**

_____

_____

_____

Day 3 Mid-Morning

Day 3 Session 2

Team Evaluation and Feedback (1 hour) 11:15-12:15 pm

LUNCH BREAK (1 HOUR) 12:15- 1:15PM

Day 3: Session Three

Activity 1 –Load, Power and Margin Theory by Howard McClusky

Facilitator- Eron Mclean (1 hour) 1:15-2:15 pm

Learning Objectives: The participants will be able to:

1. Engage in personal reflections on load and power and share their experiences
2. Identify sources of internal power and load and suggest ways to increase their internal power and reduce their internal load
3. Identify sources of external power and load and suggest ways to increase their external power and reduce their external load
4. Watch a video of a homeless man sharing his story and design a plan for him to increase his margin to get him off the street.

Introduction

1 Trainer will play a music clip of Marcia Griffith's popular song "Dreamland" in preparation to a discussion on stress. (2 mins)

2 Participants will be asked to reflect on these questions:

   a. Have you ever carried a heavy load?
   b. What was that experience like?
   c. How did you feel about carrying the load?
   d. Did you seek help with carrying that load?
   e. How did you resolve that situation?

   (15 mins)

Facilitator will make a presentation on load, power, and margin theory by Howard McClusky (30 mins).

See samples of presentation slides below.

Where do load and power come from?

- Internal Load
- External Load
- Internal Power
- External Power

Categories of Load

Internal	External
• Goals • Dreams	• Family demands • Work duties

Class Discussion: 15 mins

Participants will be invited to share their experiences on load that students experience and how they as teachers identified their students' load.

They will then share alternate perspectives to the ideas presented by their peers.

Video Presentation

Participants will watch a video of a homeless man sharing his experience of life on the street 15 mins

AFTERNOON BREAK (15 MINS) 2:15- 2:30PM

Summary of workshop (10 mins)

Workshop Evaluation (10 mins)

Participants will complete their workshop evaluations and submit same.

Closing Ceremony –3:00 PM

Issuance of Certificates (10 mins)

Vote of thanks

Termination of Workshop

Workshop Evaluation Form

Your honest feedback will let me know how satisfied you were with this workshop and will also highlight areas for improvement. Will you be kind by completing this form?

From questions 1 to 8, please select one of the responses (a): strongly disagree, (b): disagree, (c): agree or (d): strongly agree

1. The workshop was relevant to me
   (a) strongly disagree, (b) disagree, (c) agree (d) strongly agree
2. My expectations were fully met.
   (a) strongly disagree, (b) disagree, (c) agree (d) strongly agree
3 I have a much-improved appreciation of ways to engage adult learners.
   (a) strongly disagree, (b) disagree, (c) agree (d) strongly agree
4 I have gained new knowledge which I can use to be a better facilitator of adult learners.
   (a) strongly disagree, (b) disagree, (c) agree (d) strongly agree
5. The workshop requires significant improvement for others to benefit from it.
   (a) strongly disagree, (b) disagree, (c) agree (d) strongly agree
6. I recommend that this workshop be offered to all my colleagues.
   (a) strongly disagree, (b) disagree, (c) agree (d) strongly agree
7. I would not recommend this workshop to my colleagues.
   (a) strongly disagree, (b) disagree, (c) agree (d) strongly agree
8. The workshop was a good example of a class for adult learners.
   (a) strongly disagree, (b) disagree, (c) agree (d) strongly agree

From questions 9 & 10, please select as many of the responses which best represent your views.

9. The presenters were:

(a) knowledgeable,

(b) organized,

(c) sensitive,

(d)emotionally intelligent,

(e) enthusiastic,

(f) motivating,

(g) responsive

10. Topics which I found most beneficial:

(a) andragogy vs. pedagogy,

(b) transformational learning,

(c) stages of self-directed learning,

(d) multiple-intelligence theory,

(e) power, load & margin theory

The Budget

Item	Quantity	Unit Cost	Total Cost
Venue	1	$30,000.00	$90,000.00
Coffee Break	25	$10,000.00	$30,000.00
Lunch	25	$17,500.00	$52,500.00
Printing and Stationery Supplies (double pocket folders, note pads, pens, sticky pads, highlighters, permanent markers, flipchart easel and paper, resource materials)		$35,000.00	$35,000.00
Audio visuals (projector screen, laptop computer, projector, pointer, speaker)	1 each	$12,000.00	$36,000.00
TOTAL			**$243,500.00**

Appendix B: Interview Protocol Instrument for Current Students

Name: _____ Date: _____

Email: _____ Telephone: _____

Interview Questions

Introductory Questions

1. How long is your program of study on the CAP?
2. When did your course begin?
3. How would you assess your current level of performance in terms of:
    a. Academic performance
    b. Attendance and punctuality
    c. Completion of assignment on time
    d. Relationship with fellow students
    e. Relationship with teachers and other staff

RQ1: Why do students drop out of the Career Advancement Program before completion?

4. What are the reasons students give for dropping out of the Career Advancement Program?
5. What are your reasons for remaining in the CAP?
6. What kind of support do you receive so that you could remain in the program?
7. What kind of preparation did you receive before starting the CAP?
8. How do other students contribute to your decision to remain in school?
9. How does the school contribute to your remaining in the program?

10. How comfortable are you with the school?
11. Tell me how your parents are involved in your schooling.
12. What kind of support do you receive from your extended family?
13. Tell me about any support you receive from your community.
14. Tell me how each of these factors may have contributed to some students' decisions to drop out.
    - Other students (interest, relationship with peers and teachers, sense of belonging, friends)
    - School (classroom size, welcoming, culture of discipline)
    - Parents (parental support, inadequate financial support)
    - Community (lack of encouragement, level of safety)

RQ2: To what extent did your experiences in the Career Advancement Program satisfy students' needs?

15. Describe any support you receive from teachers or other persons to help you remain in CAP.
16. What could administrators could have done to cause less students from dropping out of the program?
17. How comfortable are you with the class schedule?
18. What recommendations you would make to improve the current class schedule?
19. How satisfied are you with the amount of course work you have to do?

RO3: How experienced and prepared are teachers in the CAP to teach adult learners?

20. How satisfied are you that your teachers are experienced in skills they teach and are well prepared for classes?
21. How knowledgeable do you find your teachers of their subject?
22. How suitable are your teachers' teaching styles for how you like to learn?
23. How would you describe your relationships with your teachers?
24. How well do you your teachers understand your needs?
25. How knowledgeable are your administrators of the CAP program?
26. Describe ways in whichyou think administrators could improve the CAP.
27. Is there anything else you would like to tell me about your experiences and thoughts of the CAP?

Appendix C: Interview Protocol Instrument for Dropouts

Name: _____ Date: _____

Email: _____ Telephone: _____

Interview Questions

Introductory Questions

1. How long was your program of study on the CAP?
2. When did your course begin?
3. How much time did you spend in the CAP?
4. How relevant was the course that you were doing to your career goal?
5. How did you choose to do the course that you were doing?
6. How would you assess your level of performance on the CAP in terms of?
    a. Academic performance
    b. Attendance and punctuality
    c. Completion of assignment on time
    d. Relationship with fellow students
    e. Relationship with teachers and other staff

RQ1: Why do students drop out of the Career Advancement Program before completion?

7. What are your reasons for dropping out of the Career Advancement Program?
8. Describe the thoughts and feelings which you experienced before deciding to drop out of the CAP.
9. Tell me what you could have done differently to remain in the program.
10. Describe what your life has been like since dropping out of the CAP.

11. Describe the orientation you received before starting the CAP.
12. How did other students contribute to your decision to drop out?
13. How comfortable were you with the school and what you experienced there?
14. How involved were your parents in your schooling?
15. What kind of support did you receive from your extended family?
16. Tell me about any support you received from your community.

RQ2: To what extent did their experiences in the Career Advancement Program satisfy students' needs?

17. Describe the support you received from teachers or others to discourage you from dropping out of the CAP.
18. What more could your administrators have done to change your mind from dropping out?
19. How did the time for which classes were scheduled affect your decision to drop out?
20. If you had less course work to do, how would it have changed your mind from dropping out?

RO3: How experienced and prepared are teachers in the CAP to teach adult learners?

21. How knowledgeable do find your teachers of the subjects that they teach?
22. How suitable did you find your teachers teaching styles?
23. How prepared were your teachers for classes?
24. How knowledgeable and experienced were your teachers of their subjects?
25. How suitable were your teachers teaching styles for the ways you like to learn?

26. How would you describe your relationships with your teachers?
27. How well did you your teachers understand your needs?
28. How knowledgeable were your administrators of the CAP?
29. Describe ways in which administrators could improve the CAP.
30. Is there anything else you would like to tell me about your experiences and thoughts of the CAP?

Appendix D: Interview Protocol Instrument for Administrators

(Principals, Coordinators, Bursars)

Name: _____ Date: _____

Email: _____ Telephone: _____

Interview Questions

Introductory Questions

1. How long have you been employed in the Career Advancement Program?
2. Since being employed to the CAP, what are the different roles and functions you have performed?
3. What are the different roles and functions you are currently performing?
4. How would you assess your current level of performance in relation to?
    a. Attracting students to the CAP
    b. Securing competent teachers for the CAP
    c. Fulfilling the needs of your students
    d. Retaining students in the CAP

RQ1: Why do students drop out of the Career Advancement Program before completion?

5. What would you say are the most pressing factors or other factors you know about which caused students to drop out of the Career Advancement Program?
6. Describe the phases which you may have observed that students go through before finally dropping out of the CAP.
7. What could you have done differently to retain more students in the program and to help them to avoid them dropping out?

RQ2: To what extent did their experiences in the Career Advancement Program satisfy students' needs?

8. To what extent do you view it as your responsibility to help satisfy students' needs, so they can remain in the program through to completion?
9. How adequate are the kinds of assistance given by the administrators to meet the needs of students?
10. How aware are you of each of these three support systems that are built into the program?
    a. Orientation toolkit
    b. Student guide
    c. Student welfare
11. How could the CAP orientation toolkit be improved?
12. In what ways would you improve the student guide?
13. What improvements would you make to CAP students' welfare?
14. What is your role in communicating these support systems to the students?
15. What is the level of uptake for these students' support mechanisms?

RO3: How experienced and prepared are teachers in the CAP to teach adult learners?

16. What training have you received to manage adult learners in a post-secondary school setting?
17. Since being associated with the CAP, what training have you received to teach adult learners?

18. How necessary is it for teachers to receive any added special training to teach adult learners?
19. What training has been provided to prepare CAP teachers to teach adult learners at your school?
20. Is there anything else you would like to tell me?

Appendix E: Interview Protocol Instrument for Teachers

Name: _____ Date: _____

Email: _____ Telephone: _____

Interview Questions

Introductory Questions

1. How long have you been employed in the Career Advancement Program?
2. What are the subjects you have taught over the course of your employment to CAP?
3. What specific training have you received to instruct students in the subjects you currently teaching?
4. Apart from teaching on the CAP, what other jobs do you perform at this or any other institution?
5. How would you assess your current level of performance in respect to the following?
    - Students score
    - Class participation
    - Attendance
    - Discipline

RQ1: Why do students drop out of the Career Advancement Program before completion?

6. What would you say are the most pressing factors or other factors you know about which caused students to drop out of the Career Advancement Program?

7. Describe the phases which you may have observed that students go through before finally dropping out of the CAP.
8. What could you have done differently to retain more students in the program and avoid them dropping out?

RQ2: To what extent did their experiences in the Career Advancement Program satisfy students' needs?

9. To what extent do you view it as your responsibility to help satisfy students' needs, so they can remain in the program through to completion?
10. How adequate are the kinds of assistance given by the administrators to meet the needs of students?
11. How aware are you of each of these three support systems that are built into the program?
    a. Orientation toolkit
    b. Student guide
    c. Student welfare
12. What improvements, if any, would you suggest be made to these three support systems built into the CAP for students?
    a. Orientation toolkit
    b. Student guide
    c. Student welfare
13. What is your role in communicating these support systems to the students?
14. What is the level of uptake for these students support mechanisms?

15. If you could, what would you like to tell the administrators about ways you think they could improve the CAP or in working with you?

RQ3: How experienced and prepared are teachers in the CAP to teach adult learners?

16. What training have you received to manage adult learners in a post-secondary school setting?
17. Since being associated with the CAP, what training have you received to teach adult learners?
18. How necessary is it for teachers to receive special training to teach adult learners?
19. What training has been provided to prepare CAP teachers to teach adult learners at your school?
20. Is there anything else you would like to tell me?

Appendix F: Questionnaire

Instructions: Please answer all the questions below as honestly as possible. Tick the letter which best corresponds with your choice of response. Some questions may have multiple responses. Tick all that apply.

1. Into which of the following groups do you belong in relation to the Career Advancement Program?
    a. Current student
    b. Dropout
    c. Administrator (Principals, Coordinators, and Bursars)
    d. Teacher
2. There were many reasons students give for dropping out of the CAP. (Tick all that apply)
    a. Family
    b. Financial
    c. Got a job
    d. Change of address
    e. School
    f. Class schedule
    g. Pregnancy
    h. Other _____

3. What were the main support systems CAP students have?
    a. School
    b. Family
    c. Community
    d. Friends
    e. Other _____
4. What were the chief motivations students have for remaining in the program? (Tick all that apply)
    a. Desire to be certified
    b. Influence from teachers
    c. Influence from parents
    d. Want to improve themselves
    e. Desire to be successful
    f. CAP as the way for a better life
    g. Prospect of a better paying job
    h. Prospect of a good Career
    i. Other _____

5. Students were fully briefed about the CAP before they begin the program.
    a. Completely agree
    b. Somewhat agree
    c. Agree
    d. Somewhat disagree
    e. Disagree
    f. Completely disagree
6. The school provides strong support to enable students to remain in the CAP.
    a. Completely agree
    b. Somewhat agree
    c. Agree
    d. Somewhat disagree
    e. Disagree
    f. Completely disagree
7. The school climate is welcoming to all students.
    a. Completely agree
    b. Somewhat agree
    c. Agree
    d. Somewhat disagree
    e. Disagree
    f. Completely disagree

8. My school caters to students' needs.
    a. Completely agree
    b. Somewhat agree
    c. Agree
    d. Somewhat disagree
    e. Disagree
    f. Completely disagree
9. Classes attract students' attention
    a. Completely agree
    b. Somewhat agree
    c. Agree
    d. Somewhat disagree
    e. Disagree
    f. Completely disagree
10. Teachers were well prepared for classes.
    a. Completely agree
    b. Somewhat agree
    c. Agree
    d. Somewhat disagree
    e. Disagree
    f. Completely disagree

11. The incidence of dropouts is a problem for only the students and their families.
    a. Completely agree
    b. Somewhat agree
    c. Agree
    d. Somewhat disagree
    e. Disagree
    f. Completely disagree
12. Administrators (Principals, Coordinators, Bursars) of the CAP could do more to prevent students from dropping out.
    a. Completely agree
    b. Somewhat agree
    c. Agree
    d. Somewhat disagree
    e. Disagree
13. Completely disagree

    The Ministry of Education, Youth, and Information could do more to prevent students from dropping out.
    a. Completely agree
    b. Somewhat agree
    c. Agree
    d. Somewhat disagree
    e. Disagree
    f. Completely disagree

14. The CAP provides a great learning experience for students.
    a. Completely agree
    b. Somewhat agree
    c. Agree
    d. Somewhat disagree
    e. Disagree
    f. Completely disagree
15. Administrators (Principals, Coordinators, and Bursars) of the CAP understand students' needs.
    a. Completely agree
    b. Somewhat agree
    c. Agree
    d. Somewhat disagree
    e. Disagree
    f. Completely disagree
16. Administrators (Principals, Coordinators, and Bursars) of the CAP were attentive to students' needs.
    a. Completely agree
    b. Somewhat agree
    c. Agree
    d. Somewhat disagree
    e. Disagree
    f. Completely disagree

17. Teachers were knowledgeable about the subjects they teach.

    a. Completely agree
    b. Somewhat agree
    c. Agree
    d. Somewhat disagree
    e. Disagree
    f. Completely disagree

18. Teachers were sensitive to students' learning style.

    a. Completely agree
    b. Somewhat agree
    c. Agree
    d. Somewhat disagree
    e. Disagree
    f. Completely disagree

Appendix G: Teacher Qualification, Training, and Experience Form

School	

No.	**Qualification and Tertiary Institution Attended**	**Years of Experience Teaching Adults**	**Period of Employment on CAP**	**Subject/Skill Area Currently Teaching**	**CAP In-Service Training Received and Dates**	**Other Training Received in the Last 2 Years**
1						
2						
3						
4						
5						
6						

Appendix H: Secondary Data Capture Form

Name of School…….. Period……

Number of students enrolled	Number of students in regular attendance	Number of students dropped out	Steps taken to reduce dropout problem	Outcomes